Reader's digest

JULY/AUGUST 2015

SPECIAL

Extraordinary AMERICA

Everyday Heroes Who Make Our Country Great ... 68

★

Places That Have Our Hearts ... 12

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BURIED ALIVE!
From the book
DEEP DOWN DARK

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An RD ORIGINAL

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When Doctors Charge Extra ..... CONSUMER REPORTS
Confessions of White House Staff ..... THE RESIDENCE
Limits of the Human Body ..... POPULAR SCIENCE
The Safest Cuts of Meat ..... MOTHER JONES
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Readers Photo Contest
12 **PLACES CLOSE TO YOUR HEART**
You submitted your photographs of extraordinary America. Here are the winners.

FROM LEFT: ILLUSTRATION BY KAGAN MCLEOD. PHOTOGRAPH BY ADAM VOORHES. ILLUSTRATION BY SERGE BLOCH

Editor's Note

Do You See What I See?

A BASKET SITS BY my front door. It's my daughters' shoe basket, and it's spilling over with sneakers, flip-flops, rain boots, snow boots, Crocs for around the house, and Merrells for hikes in the woods.

When I look at the photograph on page 68, that basket is all I can see. Some of the girls pictured there couldn't "bring an extra pair of shoes to the photo shoot in case it rains," as we'd suggested. In their families, shoes are shared among siblings. What they wore was all they had.

The girls are refugees from war-torn countries like Syria, Rwanda, Congo, and Sudan who have legally resettled in Chicago. Twenty-six-year-old Blair Brettschneider started a program to help them with everything from their English to their résumés.

Some of the girls in this picture have fled bombs and lost family. We have welcomed them to our shores and told them to go ahead and start a new life in a place where they will be safe. They have had to adjust to all the seriousness, silliness, and scrutiny that is an American high school while assuming the role of caretaker for their families—minding siblings, translating the mail, accompanying relatives to doctors' appointments. So I look at this picture, and I see the extraordinary.

I also see something blissfully ordinary. I see girls who giggle and whisper. They do cartwheels on the lawn and take selfies with their phones. I look at the picture, and I see girls who are indescribably grateful to be here, and that makes me grateful to be American. What do you see? R

I invite you to e-mail me at **liz@rd.com** and follow me at **facebook.com/lizvaccariello** and **@LizVacc** on Twitter.

PHOTOGRAPH BY STEVE VACCARIELLO; WARDROBE STYLIST: ELYSHA LENKIN; HAIR AND MAKEUP: AMY KLEWITZ FOR PRO-STYLE-CREW; JEWELRY: MIRANDA FRYE; ALI BLUMENTHAL (INSET PHOTO)

20/200

NOW§

20/100

THE MOST

20/90

COMPLETE^ EYE

20/70

MULTIVITAMIN IS HERE.

20/50

CENTRUM SILVER PLUS VISION.*

20/30

DESIGNED WITH KEY NUTRIENTS TO SUPPORT

20/20

HEALTHY VISION,° GLARE REDUCTION+ & RETINAL FUNCTION.‡*

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Letters

COMMENTS ON THE MAY ISSUE

Laughter, the Best Medicine (Even at the Doctor's Office!)

I read the skeleton-at-the-bar joke to my wife. She said it had to be a woman skeleton. A man would have ordered only the beer and forgotten the mop!

WILLIAM THOMPSON, *Dickson, Tennessee*

A Lifetime of Humor

When I was a kid, my mom would read *Reader's Digest* jokes to me. In high school, I would flip through and find each page that had a joke. In college, she would tear out the jokes and send them to me in the mail. When she passed away, I got my very own subscription. Now I know I have truly hit adulthood—I read the entire magazine from cover to cover.

KATIE DENSON, *Coronado, California*

Watch the World Wake Up

I am a lover of international travel. However, I was so turned off by Peter Jon Lindberg's unrepentant story of stealing a baguette that I almost didn't finish the article. It's this kind of dishonesty and sense of entitlement that gives travelers a bad name in the places they visit.

HEIDI MONROE, *Shoreline, Washington*

Freeze Better & Defrost Faster

This article recommends freezing bacon grease for later use as salad dressing or for frying food. The only good use for unhealthy grease is as biodiesel fuel!

KEN GREEN, *Burbank, California*

I Owe It All to Community College

Our local community college also provided me with a good foundation for a rewarding career—in engineering. I'll never forget Professor Buzzard, who left me with the most important lesson: Think!

RICK RODRIGO, *Chalfont, Pennsylvania*

Thanks, Mr. Hanks, for reminding us: Be it ever so humble, there's no place like an institution of higher learning.

EILEEN MERICLE, *Bentonville, Arkansas*

A Letter to Sophie

Dave Barry's advice to his daughter was hilarious but true. Before I drove alone for the first time, my father dangled the keys in front of my face and said, "You now have control of a deadly weapon." That was over 50 years ago, but I remember his warning every time I start my car.

CLARA K. JONES, *Chesterland, Ohio*

The Voice in the Box

May I have the love to reach out through the phone if a little voice ever tells me he's just hurt himself with a hammer.

LIANE CHAPELL, *Port Charlotte, Florida*

This was the first time a story brought tears to my eyes. Thank you, from a 78-year-old man.

ALFRED EHMAN, *Fort Myers, Florida*

We need more stories like this and reminders that there are other worlds to sing in.

DOLORES CASTALDO, *Middletown, Delaware*

Why We Bend the Rules

There is a dichotomy between what we do personally and what we expect of others. I believe most of us want others to treat us honestly in our dealings with them. The Golden Rule is applicable here: Do to others as you would have them do to you.

LINDA SOMMER, *Bluffton, Ohio*

Humor in Uniform

With the hundreds of thousands of current and former service members, I fail to understand why Humor in Uniform gets so little space in your magazine. Are there just no submissions worth printing?

ROBERT A. LEE, *Chester, Virginia*

We are eager to receive more submissions for our Humor in Uniform column. Send us your funniest anecdote about life in the military—it might be worth $100. For details, go to rd.com/submit or see below.

Send letters to letters@rd.com or Letters, Reader's Digest, PO Box 6100, Harlan, Iowa 51593-1600. Include your full name, address, e-mail, and daytime phone number. We may edit letters and use them in all print and electronic media. **Contribute** Send us your 100-word true stories, jokes, and funny quotes, and if we publish one in a print edition of *Reader's Digest*, we'll pay you $100. To submit your 100-word stories, visit rd.com/stories. To submit humor items, visit rd.com/submit, or write to us at Jokes, Box 6226, Harlan, Iowa 51593-1726. Please include your full name and address in your entry. We regret that we cannot acknowledge or return unsolicited work. **Do Business** Subscriptions, renewals, gifts, address changes, payments, account information, and inquiries: Visit rd.com/help, call 877-732-4438, or write to us at Reader's Digest, PO Box 6095, Harlan, Iowa 51593-1595.

EVERYDAY HEROES

On a dark night, a teen's car headlights signaled hope for an abused woman

He Was Driven To Help

BY MEERA JAGANNATHAN

CALEB MARTIN'S shift as a fast-food cook ended at around 8:30 p.m. on New Year's Day, and the 18-year-old hopped into his car for the quick drive home through the wooded back roads of Pegram, Tennessee.

Shortly after he turned left onto Old Sams Creek Road, an SUV coming toward him made a U-turn, pulling into Caleb's lane about 15 feet in front of him.

Just then, a woman came out of nowhere and staggered toward the SUV in the middle of the road. "I figured the driver would go around her or stop to help," Caleb says.

Instead, the SUV driver slowed down and swerved toward the woman, forced her back to the shoulder, and pinned her against the guardrail. Caleb jammed on the brakes, honked, and lowered his window, yelling for the other driver to stop. The man stuck his head out his window to glare at Caleb, then backed up and sped away.

Caleb pulled to the side of ➤➤

PHOTOGRAPH BY DAVID MCCLISTER

"I see myself as a regular person doing the right thing," says Caleb Martin.

the road and ran to the sobbing woman, Jenna Newman, 28, who was bleeding from her chest and left arm. Jacob speed-dialed 911 and helped Jenna to his car. She explained that her boyfriend, Kenneth Clinton, 67, had shot her at close range but that she had managed to open the car door and jump out. Caleb, concerned that his 1992 Buick might break down before they made it to the hospital, ten miles away, directed the 911 dispatcher to send an ambulance to his nearby house, where he lived with his grandparents.

"Am I going to die?" Jenna wailed as they raced down the road.

"No," he said. "I won't let you die."

Once they reached the house, Caleb's grandmother Patricia King helped Jenna to a recliner in the living room and pressed clean rags onto her wounds.

When Cheatham County Sheriff's Office deputy Gary Ola arrived, he took statements from Caleb and Jenna before an ambulance transported her to Vanderbilt University Medical Center, about 20 miles away in Nashville.

Caleb rode with the cops back to the crime scene and showed them where Jenna had been pinned to the guardrail. Over the police radio, they heard a dispatch that Kenneth Clinton had taken his own life at a nearby park.

Caleb believes his own past as a physically abused child at the hands of his mother's boyfriends galvanized him to rush to Jenna's aid.

"I couldn't just leave her," he says. "If somebody needs help, you help."

In the weeks that followed, the Tennessee House of Representatives passed a resolution "to honor and commend Caleb for heroism," and Safe Haven Cheatham County, a home for domestic violence survivors, invited him to cut the ribbon at its grand opening.

In February, Caleb received a letter from Jenna, thanking him for saving her. "She called me her angel," he says. R

READER'S HERO

A SURFER SAVED ME

In January, I got caught in a riptide near Guiones Beach, Costa Rica, and floated far from the shore within seconds. My husband alerted a surfer named Jesse Chatty, who immediately began paddling toward me. When he got to me, I was exhausted and afraid I wouldn't survive, but he calmed me down, instructed me to grab onto his surfboard, and took us farther out to sea before finding a way back to shore. I will be thankful for the rest of my life that Jesse was there when I needed him.

ROSEMARY FORD, *Seattle, Washington*

To nominate your hero, e-mail the details and your name and location to heroes@rd.com.

Photos From the Ashes

BY ALYSSA JUNG

Restoring photos of the three boys was a "labor of love," says professor Debra Norris.

COURTESY EVAN KRAPE/UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE

ON DECEMBER 26, 2014, a fierce fire engulfed the home of Terry Harris, 60, in Washington Court House, Ohio. Terry's grandsons Kenyon, 14, Broderick, 11, and Braylon, nine, were spending Christmas night with her. She and the three children died in the fire and subsequent collapse of the ranch-style house.

Sick with grief, Terry's son Ricky Harris and his wife, Traci, the boys' parents, welcomed friends into their home, just down the street from where Ricky's mother's house had once stood. One of them was Michael J. Emmons Jr., who'd driven eight hours from Newark, Delaware, to comfort Ricky, an old high school buddy.

"When I heard the news, I felt deeply for him," Michael says.

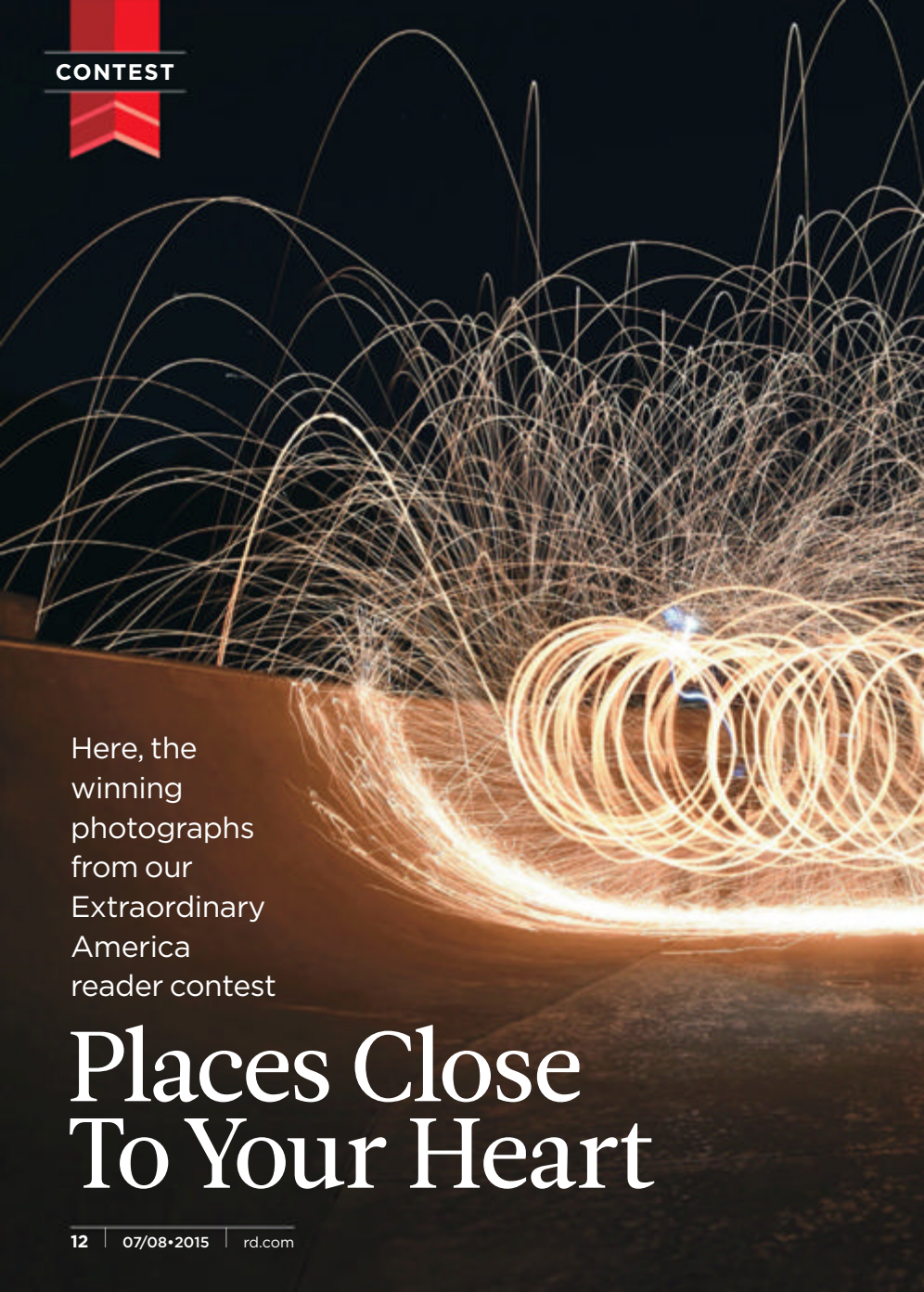
On the garage floor of the Harrises' house, a relative had laid out more than 200 charred and waterlogged photographs, including shots of the boys wearing their basketball and wrestling uniforms or posing for class pictures, salvaged from the fire. Michael, a doctoral student in preservation studies at the University of Delaware, saw in the sad scene an opportunity to help. He called Debra Norris, chair of the university's art conservation department, for advice on how to save the photos.

"I thought she would recommend a restoration service," says Michael. Instead, she asked him to ship the photos to her right away.

Every day for two weeks, Debra, along with ten photo-preservation graduate students and dozens of other faculty and local conservators, meticulously cleaned soot and debris off the images with tiny brushes and foam cosmetic sponges. An alcohol solution removed tougher grime.

Three months later, Debra and Michael delivered a box of restored photos to the bereaved parents.

"I would love to see my mom's face, knowing that all these people cared," Ricky says. R



Here, the winning photographs from our Extraordinary America reader contest

Places Close To Your Heart

GRAND PRIZE

SKATE PARK

I have been skating about eight years. Growing up in a broken home, I found that the park was my one light in a lot of darkness. Every time I go to Moraga Commons Park, I create a new memory. I've learned to persevere through pain, to never get lazy, and to always be humble. I got this effect by using a long exposure and swinging a lit wad of steel wool in front of my camera to create a "light painting." The hundreds of sparks spiraling out symbolize my infinite possibilities. **PAUL RICKMAN, 18,** *Oakland, California*

GROTTO

My family immigrated to Georgia from Germany when I was a teenager. One of the most serene places I've found here is the cool-water Radium Springs. It used to be a casino resort before floods destroyed it in 1994. Now you can see where the river runs through it, and it takes your breath away. I've spent summer days on the deck here, contemplating how grateful I am to live in Georgia.

CAROLINE MILAM, 48,
Canton, Georgia

MONASTERY

My wife, Elsa, and I first went to the Monastery of Christ in the Desert in northern New Mexico in 2004, when she was worn down from a long treatment for hepatitis C. It was miles from the nearest road, along the Rio Chama. We were there for almost a week, and at her request, the monks prayed for her. It was very significant and healing. We go there to unwind and recharge our batteries. It's worth visiting just to listen to the chants.

BILL D'ELLIS, 76,
Albuquerque, New Mexico

CREEK

This was last summer at the children's park in Ringgold City, when my granddaughter, Emma, was four years old. We had just had our "pancakes in the park," which has become a weekly ritual: We sit under the gazebo, she has a Happy Meal with pancakes and milk, and I have my coffee. When I saw her coming out of the creek, it took me back 40 years. Being carefree and innocent in that moment—that's what I wanted to capture.

ANGELA BARNES, 51,
Tunnel Hill, Georgia

To see more photo finalists, download the **Reader's Digest** *app or go to rd.com/july.*

Department of Wit

What Your Health Plan Is Trying to Tell You

BY SERENA CRAWFORD FROM FUNNY WOMEN ON THERUMPUS.NET

SERENA CRAWFORD is a fiction writer whose new book *Here Among Strangers* is forthcoming in 2016.

Dear Sir/Madam/Dependent/Spouse/Dependent No. 2,

This notice is to inform you that the procedure/treatment performed on January 2, 2015, is not covered under your health plan by reason code *L0L*.

Receiving an Explanation of Benefits showing that a service was not covered can be confusing and frustrating. We are here to help. Please refer to the following reason codes explaining why your problem cannot be covered.

PRE&PRE: This service requires preauthorization of the preauthorization.

ILLUSTRATION BY JOE MCKENDRY (CRAWFORD)

ILLUSTRATION BY STEVE WACKSMAN

PENPAL78: The Plan will not pay for this service until you mail forms back and forth with us seven or eight times.

V0CAB: Because we're not sure what the word *maxillofacial* means.

TOS5UP: If there is a conflict between what is written in the *Benefit Handbook* and your Health Contract, we will flip a coin. If we don't like the outcome, we will flip again.

N1C3TRY: Procedures that involve the eyes, legs, nose, or throat are deemed to be investigational according to our criteria. What a mystery the human body can be!

N0D1CE: Even though you received services from a Participating Provider, he hasn't been joining in of late. Also, we don't like his new mustache.

5ONG: Because the song "Shake It Off" is stuck in our heads, and it's driving us crazy.

DUMBA55: The Plan does not cover foreign objects in ears if the patient is an adult and the object is something stupid. Examples include a Cheerio, a Lego, a crayon, an hors d'oeuvre, a chess piece, and a gummy bear.

WHATTH3: Why, oh why, did you go to the doctor for this? Couldn't you have had Spouse/Dependent/Dependent No. 2 just get you an ice pack?

MATH4U: The Participating Provider/Network Not Available benefit after copay is equal to, less than, or greater than the fee allowance/coinsurance/out-of-pocket limit, or $ab2x4+bx3+cx2+dx+ad2=0$.

L0L: LOL.

OOPSX2: Not again! Really? Didn't you learn your lesson the first time?

If you have questions about why we have not paid your claims, our staff is available to converse with you Monday through Tuesday, 8 a.m. to 8:30 a.m., in Code, pig Latin, or emojis. We look forward to serving you by avoiding your health-care needs! Isthay is otnay an illingbay!

Please retain for your records. R

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THE PRICIEST PLACE ON EARTH?

I like going to theme parks. I think because I hate money.

PAUL F. TOMPKINS, comedian
Source: Comedy Central

Points to Ponder

"EVERYBODY YOU EVER meet knows something you don't." A cab driver told me that 30 years ago, and I'm reminded of it every single day.

BILL NYE,
science educator, in *Men's Journal*

AMERICA IS AN unfinished masterpiece. America, like no other nation, allows you to participate in its progress, carve a place in its promise, play a role in its possibilities. This is both a privilege for Americans and a necessity for the nation.

EBOO PATEL,
founder of an interfaith youth organization, in the book *Gettysburg Replies*

☛ ***Sign up for a daily Points to Ponder e-mail at rd.com/ptp.***

WITH 26 SHAPES arranged in varying patterns, we can tell every story known to mankind and make up all the new ones ... If you can give language to experiences previously starved for it, you can make the world a better place.

ANDREW SOLOMON,
writer, in a speech at the Whiting Awards

WE HAVE a tendency to define ourselves in opposition to stuff ... But try to also express your passion for things you love. Be demonstrative and generous in your praise of those you admire. Send thank-you cards, and give standing ovations. Be pro-stuff, not just anti-stuff.

TIM MINCHIN,
comedian, in a commencement speech at the University of Western Australia

Everything in life boils down to this riddle: Are you what you think you are? The world will let you know whether you are a keeper or just recreational.

BILL WITHERS, *musician,* in *Garden & Gun*

ILLUSTRATIONS BY KAGAN MCLEOD

There's a tremendous amount of power that comes from not having to say yes.

JODIE FOSTER, ***actress,*** in *Esquire*

ETIQUETTE HAS an evolutionary basis ... Humans question how to find mates, raise kids, get their fair share to eat, and resolve conflicts. If you're a chimpanzee or a wolf, your biology gives you the answers. If you're a human, you write to an advice columnist.

ROBIN ABRAHAMS,
etiquette columnist,
in *Boston Globe Magazine*

SOME OF THE BEST IDEAS come in the shower because, thank God, no one has invented a waterproof smartphone yet.

ARIANNA HUFFINGTON,
cofounder of the Huffington Post, in a speech at the Simmons Leadership Conference

WHAT I LIKE to do is *do*—not the fact that I *did*. It doesn't excite me. When people start to think that what they did in the past is perhaps even better than what they do now, they should stop.

KARL LAGERFELD,
fashion designer, in the *New York Times*

MENTAL ILLNESS is America's secret. It is the secret we keep that prevents us from asking for the help we need.

FRANK WARREN,
creator of the PostSecret project, on the Maryland Coalition for Mental Health Awareness website

WHEN WE WERE YOUNG ... we knew basic history, even as it related to fashion. Now when something reappears, an 18-year-old has no clue that it's a revival. I think that's part of why visual things are becoming so derivative.

FRAN LEBOWITZ,
critic, in *Elle*

THEY TREAT YOU very differently from other women [when you're seen as beautiful] ... You have to make people comfortable with you. Of course, I'm grateful beyond words that I had it, but beauty's very often the elephant in the room, and you're the elephant handler.

CANDICE BERGEN,
actress, in *Time*

Chemical Reaction

A scientist blames himself for our suspicion of chemistry

BY MARK LORCH
FROM *BBC NEWS MAGAZINE*

I REALLY ENJOY my job. I get to wallow in the fascinating world of research science and then pass on my passions to eager young minds. And I pull out all the stops—liquid nitrogen gets sloshed around in abundance, hydrogen balloons are ignited like mini *Hindenburg*s, and ethanol-fueled rockets zip around the playgrounds. Chemistry is fun.

So why is it the bogeyman of the sciences? Why is everybody scared of chemicals?

The very word *chemical* is often used as a synonym for *toxin* or *poison*. We say something is "chock-full of chemicals" to imply it's artificial and bad for you. Meaningless slogans like "chemical-free" pop up on products in health food stores and billboards. And nobody seems to mind, least of all the United Kingdom's Advertising Standards Authority. I know—I've complained to them, and they told me that consumers clearly understand that *chemical-free* really means "free of synthetic chemicals."

I don't get the distinction. Why are synthetic chemicals worse than natural ones? Why is the synthetic food additive E300 bad, while the vitamin C in your freshly squeezed orange juice is good, even though they are the same thing?

Biology doesn't get a bad rap—quite the opposite. Biology has amazing animals and plants, the Human Genome Project, and David Attenborough. It's natural and good.

What about physics? Well, physics is just really cool. It's got stars, lasers, and the most impressive machine ever built—the Large Hadron Collider—all fronted by physicist Brian Cox beautifully explaining the wonders of the universe. It doesn't get any cooler than that.

And then there's chemistry, which, by reputation, has pollution, toxins, and weapons so bad that they warrant a Nobel Peace Prize–winning organization to control them. The closest thing we've got to a celebrity chemist comes from the AMC drama *Breaking Bad*, in which Walter White, a chemistry teacher turned drug kingpin, uses his encyclopedic chemistry knowledge to synthesize hard drugs, poison his enemies, and dissolve the bodies of his victims. He doesn't really do much to combat chemophobia.

Chemistry is fascinating because of the way it can be used to synthesize new stuff—it's like molecular Legos. The fact that everything is made from 100-odd building blocks is remarkable. Throw chemicals in a pot in the right way, and you can build the world around us.

To me, chemistry's bad

MARK LORCH ***is a chemist and a senior lecturer at the University of Hull. He has written for*** **Scientific American,** ***the*** **Guardian,** ***and*** **Ars Technica.**

ILLUSTRATION BY JOE MCKENDRY

PHOTOGRAPH BY RUSS AND REYN

reputation seems very odd. Consider the estimated 1,300 deaths in Syria as the result of sarin gas. They were, of course, absolutely horrific. But why were they worse than the 200,000 deaths caused by conventional physical weapons?

Closer to home: What's the most likely cause of injury or illness? I'm willing to bet my house that if you've been laid up in bed lately, it's due to some biological bug or physical injury, not any sort of chemical-related poisoning. And what do you take to ease the symptoms of that dreadful common cold, sprained ankle, or pounding headache? A chemical analgesic, of course.

> ***"Whose fault is it that people are so scared of chemicals? Simple: mine. It's my fault."***

It is true that chemicals can be dangerous. My horticulturist grandfather taught me that. He had a small farm with a large brick outbuilding that housed his lab, the contents of which he had assembled over years of amateur experimentation with plants and soils. To a ten-year-old fledgling chemistry geek, it was an Aladdin's cave of strange instruments, bottles, and weird muddy mixtures.

If we were really good, my grandfather would get out his sodium metal, mysteriously sitting in its jar of oil (he'd acquired it sometime in the distant past when health and safety weren't quite what we know and love now). Then he'd gingerly take it to a quiet corner of his plot and, with a long pair of forceps, carefully extract a lump of the soft, glistening metal before hurling it into a bucket of water. *FIZZZZZ, BANG!* Maybe you had a chemistry teacher who was fond of that demonstration, but trust me, my grandfather did it bigger and better. He taught me that chemicals can be dangerous, and if something dreadful had gone wrong in his makeshift lab, then no doubt the papers would have reported on the role of chemistry.

But what if Grandpa had been negligent with the upkeep of the railings around his balcony? What if he had fallen off, gravity accelerating him at 32 feet per second squared, until he hit the hard ground below? Would anyone have described it as an awful physics accident? Why does chemistry's role in accidents get highlighted, and whose fault is it that people are so scared of chemicals?

Simple: mine.

It's my fault and my grandfather's. We are responsible for chemophobia. Why? Well, my grandfather's sodium demo certainly fueled my enthusiasm for chemistry. But it didn't spark it—that happened somewhere else. And

sparking an interest is what he should have done and what I should be doing.

Pouring fuel onto the flames of enthusiasm is easy, especially with chemistry. The theater is easy too—the bangs, the flames, the explosions, the pops, the whizzes, the smoke, and the rockets are all fabulously entertaining. I love it, and I love the whoops and cries and applause from the audience.

But at the end of the day, what does the audience remember? Just those bangs and not a jot of chemistry. Explosive, flaming chemistry demos do nothing to show what chemistry can build and everything to highlight what it can destroy. And in the process, they blow out any flickering interest in chemistry and replace it with fear.

Instead of listening to the boys asking for more explosions, I should have paid attention to the girl at the back with her hands over her ears. I should have shown her how easy it is to do fascinating chemistry safely. Soak a bit of red cabbage in water, and you have a powerful pH indicator that miraculously changes color when you add vinegar. Or get some sodium bicarbonate and mix it with some aluminum foil, and you can chemically clean your silver spoons.

I should also have told the class about the fascinating stories tucked away in the history of chemistry, like Hungarian chemist George de Hevesy concealing his friends' solid-gold Nobel Prize medals from Nazis on the hunt for precious metals. He didn't want to risk burying them or simply hiding them somewhere, so he dissolved the medals in a mixture of hydrochloric and nitric acids, then stored the bottles on the shelves of his laboratory, hiding them in plain sight. The Nazi troopers marched straight past them. In 1945, de Hevesy used another simple bit of chemistry to recover the gold and returned the metal to the Nobel Prize committee, who had those medals recast and returned to their rightful owners.

Those are the demonstrations that fire imaginations and fuel a love of chemistry. Those are the stories that kill chemophobia. R

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UPDATING A CLASSIC

If *The Breakfast Club* were made today, it would be a silent film about five kids staring at their phones.

@SCHINDIZZLE

The smell of

Gig Harbor, WA

The
coffee
on my mother's breath as she kissed me goodbye and handed me my lunch for school.
REBECCA PHILLIPS

The fragrance of the
Pond's cold cream
Grandma put on her face every night.
MICHELLE DEILKE

Mowed grass, burning leaves,
BBQ smoke,
Dad's Old Spice, and the scent of a new baby doll.
BECKY LOMAX BARIOLA

Juicy Fruit gum,
which you could smell across the room whenever my grandma opened her purse.
MARIA CHAVEZ

Albuquerque, NM

My mom's tortillas
and
wet adobe.
ANGIE CARDON

Chamberino, NM

Abilene, TX

Machinery and
film reels in the theater
projection booth where my dad worked.
CYNTHIA WILLIAMS DEEGAN

my childhood is...

Kiwi shoe polish.

My dad was career Army, and he showed me how to shine my boots when I joined the Air Force.

LOIS LEE BELL

Eau Claire, WI

Russiaville, IN

Caseyville, IL

Chlorine.

Swimming on the local swim team, I spent my childhood more wet than dry.

GERI BRESSLER

Ramseur, NC

Play-Doh and a fresh box of crayons. Gardenias and honeysuckle. Aramis cologne and Arpège perfume. Comet, Pledge, and

puppy breath.

PAM SUMRALL

Martinez, GA

Freshly

mowed grass.

ROY HUDSON

Lake Charles, LA

Bogalusa, LA

The smell of the

local paper mill,

the biggest employer in the community.

MARSHA WELBORN

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Can a Catholic school dismiss an educator for breaking church tenets?

The Case Of the Immoral Teacher

BY VICKI GLEMBOCKI

IN MARCH 2010, Emily Herx and her husband began in vitro fertilization—a process in which an egg and sperm are combined in a lab and then transferred to the uterus—in hopes that she would become pregnant. As part of the procedure, she needed to take a few days off from her job as a language arts teacher at St. Vincent de Paul, a Catholic school in Fort Wayne, Indiana. So in February, she e-mailed the school's principal, Sandra Guffey, who wrote back in support: "You are in my prayers." Unfortunately, the IVF failed.

The following spring, Herx and her husband began a second round of IVF. When Herx requested time off, she was called in to a meeting with Monsignor John Kuzmich, the pastor of St. Vincent de Paul Catholic Church. Kuzmich told her that another teacher had complained about Herx's participation in IVF, and the monsignor feared a "scandal" if word of her treatment got out further.

When she was hired, Herx had signed what amounted to a "morals clause" in which she'd agreed to conduct herself "in accordance with the ... teaching, authority, law, and governance of the church." However, Herx claimed that this was the first time she had been informed that receiving fertility treatments was in violation of those teachings.

ILLUSTRATION BY NOMA BAR

On April 25, 2011, Herx received notification that her teaching contract would not be renewed due to "improprieties relating to church teachings or law."

In a meeting that Herx requested, Kuzmich confirmed that Herx's performance had nothing to do with her termination. Yet, according to her complaint, he told her that she was a "grave, immoral sinner" and that there wouldn't have been an issue had she kept the news of her treatments to herself. In July, Herx appealed to the bishop of the Fort Wayne diocese, who also refused to renew her contract, claiming that IVF is "an intrinsic evil, which means that no circumstances can justify it."

On April 20, 2012, Herx filed a lawsuit against the diocese, claiming sex discrimination. The diocese requested that the case be thrown out, insisting that "the core issue raised in this lawsuit [is] a challenge to the diocese's right, as a religious employer, to make religious-based decisions consistent with its religious standards on an impartial basis."

Did the church have the right to fire Emily Herx? You be the judge.

THE VERDICT

"The triable issue is whether Mrs. Herx was nonrenewed because of her sex or because of a belief about the morality of in vitro fertilization," wrote U.S. district judge Robert Miller in response to the motion from the diocese to throw out the case. And though the diocese tried to claim otherwise, Miller was clear that religious employers are not immune to federal laws that govern sex discrimination.

At the trial, which began on December 16, 2014, and lasted for four days, the diocese argued that its decision to terminate Herx was religiously based, since the church considers IVF to be "gravely immoral" for both women and men engaged in the treatment. Throughout the proceedings, Herx's attorney, Kathleen DeLaney, argued that "the [Civil Rights Act] must protect the rights of women to attempt to have children through all methods." The jury agreed. It awarded Herx $1.9 million for compensatory damages, medical care, and lost wages. After the trial, attorneys for the diocese argued that the award be reduced, and Judge Miller complied, bringing the total down to $543,803. The diocese intends to appeal.

Agree? Disagree? Sound off at rd.com/judge.

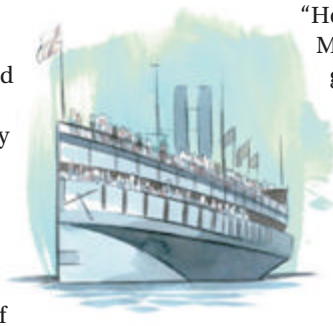
Your True Stories

IN 100 WORDS

SS *SERENDIPITY*

In July 1915, Henry and his eight-year-old daughter, Pearl, were excited for the company outing the next day. That evening, Henry had a violent argument with his landlord, ending with the landlord spitting on a painting of the Virgin Mary. Henry was so upset, he fell ill and canceled their trip. He and Pearl missed the cruise on the SS *Eastland,* which sank with over 800 people on board—but not my future grandfather and mother. Thanks to that miracle argument 100 years ago, 22 descendants are alive today.

VERNON MAGNESEN, *Elmhurst, Illinois*



CLEAR EYES, FULL HEARTS

Every day, upon picking up my 11-year-old son from school, I would ask, "How was your day?" For years, I got the same response—"Fine, fine"—with no eye contact. His autism, it seemed, was going to deprive me of the normal chitchat parents unconsciously relish. One early spring afternoon, I asked the question, expecting the same answer. "How was your day?" My son replied, "Good, good." Then he looked at me and said, "How was your day, Mom?" With tears streaming down my face, I said, "It's really good—the best day ever."

STEPHANIE ADAIR, *Metairie, Louisiana*

TINY TREE

A neighborhood kid with branches and leaves sticking out of his pockets and a headband came into our front yard. He looked like a little soldier in camouflage. "I'm acting like a tree so butterflies will come," he said. As he waited on the grass, I brought out a huge blue preserved butterfly I'd purchased in Malaysia and hid it behind my back. I walked over, kneeled, pulled out the butterfly, and said, "A butterfly has come to see you." He gasped, and his eyes widened. His wishes won't always come true, but one did that day.

MONTE UNGER, *Colorado Springs, Colorado*

To read more 100-word stories and to submit your own, go to rd.com/stories. If your story is selected for publication in the magazine, we'll pay you $100.

ILLUSTRATION BY KAGAN MCLEOD

Life

IN THESE UNITED STATES

"Here. I sold you on eBay."

WHEN I SAW an elderly woman struggling to get her walker out of the car, I jumped into action. I grabbed the walker by the handles and tussled with it until it came out. Then I opened the collapsed legs, put them in the locked position, and placed the walker in front of her. Voilà!

"Thank you," she said. "But I was trying to put it into the car."

RICHARD PARISEAU, *Arlington, Virginia*

WHILE FILLING OUT a doctor's medical questionnaire, I was stumped by this entry: "Choose one: Hispanic __ Non-Hispanic __ Other __."

ROBERTA FRANK, *Norwalk, Connecticut*

AFTER MANY TRIPS over the years to Disney World with our nephew, my husband and I were eager to hear about his first time there without us and on his own dime. He summed it

ILLUSTRATION BY BILL ABBOTT

up quite well when he said, "I discovered that Disney World is not so magical when I'm paying for it."

BARBARA ANDREWS, *South Bend, Indiana*

I COULDN'T UNDERSTAND why my son was so outraged by his friend drinking out of our hose. "What's the big deal?" I asked.

"Mom," he moaned, "he puts his mouth on it! It's disgusting!"

"But why do you care so much?"

"Because *I* drink out of that hose!"

JUDY KEITH, *Tampa, Florida*

I WAS PLAYING a guessing game with my four-year-old grandson. The clue: "It's something your mom uses to clean." The correct answer: A broom.

My grandson's answer: "A cleaning lady."

MARY MEHRING, *Brookfield, Wisconsin*

AND ONE FROM ABROAD ...

My husband and I rented a cottage, and our son agreed to join us in a few days. I texted him to bring fuel for the fires, as the evenings were chilly. A few days later, we heard that a relative had died, and I texted our son with the funeral arrangements. Somehow, the messages got scrambled, resulting in his receiving the texts almost simultaneously—but in reverse order. They read, "Uncle's funeral at crematorium 11:30 on Saturday" ... "Bring logs for the fire."

IAIN DUNCAN, *Perth, Scotland*

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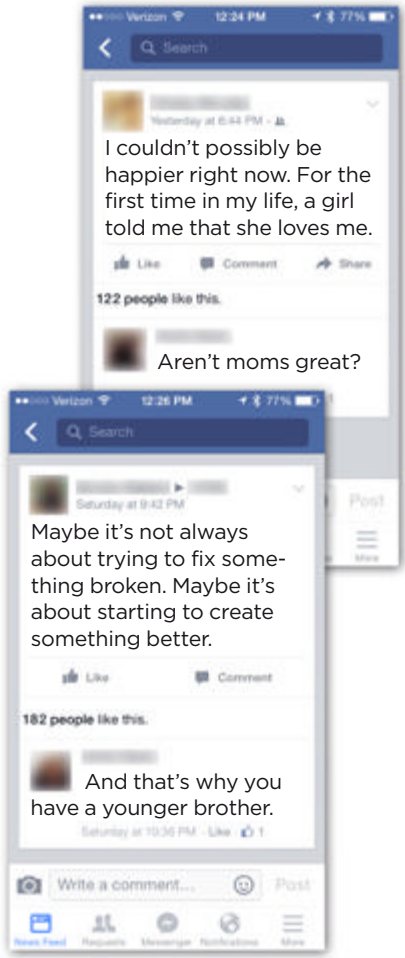

Source: opposingviews.com

Got an epically funny story about friends or family? It could be worth $$$. For details, go to page 7 or rd.com/submit.

NOTE: Ads were removed from this edition. Please continue to page 36.

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That's something even cats find amazing.

How to cope with the yakkers in your life

You Talk Too Much!

BY LENORE SKENAZY

PHOTOGRAPHS BY TRAVIS RATHBONE

WE HAD A COUPLE over for dinner the other night—friends of friends—and at first, the woman seemed charming.

Then she seemed to be sort of monopolizing the conversation.

Then we realized she NEVER SHUT UP.

And then we noticed her husband's head cocked at a weird angle. He had fallen asleep at the dinner table.

Lucky guy.

What's shocking is not that some people talk too much. What's shocking is that they don't seem to pick up on even the most obvious cues—a passed-out spouse, for instance.

It turns out there are two basic types of over-talkers. The first actually work at being entertaining because they feed off our appreciation. Whether they succeed is up to the listener. The second group is made up of those who fear that if you stop listening, they stop living. It's a problem psychologists ascribe to everything from loneliness to insecurity to arrogance.

University of Texas professor of psychology Art Markman, author of the book *Smart Change,* says nonstop talkers "need social interaction to survive, so they're just looking to plug into somebody and don't care who it is. They smell social interaction and go into a feeding frenzy."

One neighbor of ours is such an extreme yakaholic, everyone in the area dives inside when they see her coming, lest she catch their eye and start saying, "Our grandson was just given a promotion, and you know how you can get a promotion at his job? The only way you can get a promotion is ..." This is not chitchat. This is an act of aggression. Talkers mug listeners—they steal their time.

If you're ever confronted by a yakker—and you will be—try these coping strategies:

At Work

To fend off chattering coworkers, says Jennifer Kalita, CEO of the Vesta Group, a communications consulting firm in Washington, DC, "add the expression *hard stop* to your vocabulary. At the beginning of a meeting, say 'I have a hard stop at 3 p.m., so let's dig right in.'" Somehow a hard stop sounds set in stone, giving you the perfect out.

Another idea is to keep a talkative person on track by playing dumb, says psychotherapist LeslieBeth Wish, author of *Smart Relationships*. "Say 'I like what you're saying; I just want to make sure I've got it right.'" This way, you force the talker to focus.

With Friends

If a longtime chum routinely goes into talk radio mode but you don't want to sever the relationship, "plan activities where talking isn't allowed," says Kalita. "Go to the movies instead of dinner. Attend a workshop together instead of a party. Take a Zumba class in lieu of lunch."

At Home

"My mom and I would watch TV while Dad sat in his recliner and talked," recalls writer Jess Kennedy Williams. "We learned to block him out until his voice went up like he was asking a question, and then we'd say, 'Yes, I know,' or whatever."

There are far better ways to keep peace in the family. The best one is to simply keep yourself busy while the talkers talk so you won't feel they're totally wasting your time. Sort the laundry, paint the kitchen, brand the cattle. Multitasking is key.

A Yakker? Moi?

Might you be an unwitting member of the chatterati? To find out, says Kalita, examine your chatting habits like a detective. "When your friend is speaking, are you really listening or just thinking about the thing you're going to say next? When your friend tells you a story about an alligator, do you need to tell a bigger, more shocking story about an alligator?"

Perhaps most saliently: Did you ask any questions? Did you follow up with *more* questions? And were these questions not of the "That's awful. Wanna hear what happened to *me* today?" variety? A real conversation involves listening, back-and-forthing, nodding, looking surprised—basically, all the stuff you see Dr. Phil doing when he's not telling his guests how crazy they are.

There is, however, one time when you are absolutely allowed to dominate the conversation to your heart's content, and that is when that heart of yours is bursting. If your dog died, your daughter got engaged, you just lost your job or got elected to the Oval Office—if it's a really big moment in your life—babble on.

Just don't forget to thank whoever's listening for his or her time. R

How your favorite foods affect your risk of foodborne illness

Which Cut of Meat Is Safest?

BY KIERA BUTLER FROM *MOTHER JONES*

LOW RISK

Processed Foods

Sausage, hot dogs, and chicken nuggets are good bets for avoiding bacteria, according to a 2013 report from the Center for Science in the Public Interest that analyzed 12 years of foodborne-illness outbreak data. "The processing—whether it's cooking or chemicals—kills pathogens," explains Caroline Smith DeWaal, director of food safety at the CSPI. "We're not saying they are great for you, but they are low risk when it comes to acute foodborne pathogens." For example, outbreaks from chicken nuggets were rare—only 200 illnesses were documented over the 12-year period.

MEDIUM RISK

Pork

Despite its reputation as a petri dish, pork is actually relatively safe. One reason: We now cook the heck out of it. Another is that until around World War II, domestic pigs were fed garbage containing animal feces, which are full of the parasite *Trichinella,* source of the serious disease trichinosis. Laws passed in the 1950s and '60s ended that, and the incidence of trichinosis dropped dramatically.

Cold Cuts

They're less dangerous than you think. The CSPI report classifies cold cuts as medium risk. Even though deli meats are at high risk for the pathogen *Listeria monocytogenes,* which causes listeria (a very dangerous foodborne illness), most of us can eat contaminated cold cuts without getting sick. But senior citizens and immunocompromised people who contract listeria face a hospitalization rate of 90 percent. In women who are pregnant, the bacteria can cause miscarriage or stillbirth.

HIGH RISK

Steak

In theory, steak should be safe (the cooking process kills bacteria ➳

FOOD STYLIST: JAMIE KIMM

PHOTOGRAPH BY TRAVIS RATHBONE

HIGHEST RISK
HIGH RISK
MEDIUM RISK
LOW RISK

BE A HEALTHIER CARNIVORE

BY KELSEY KLOSS

Be picky at the market
If packages of meat have excessive liquid, they may have been stored at an improper temperature or for too long. The container should be relatively dry.

Stop washing meat
The rules have changed: Whereas home cooks commonly wash meat before cooking to splash away pathogens, the USDA now says this process doesn't kill any bacteria. Instead, it spreads germs all over your hands, sink, and kitchen.

Clean hands and surfaces often
Harmful bacteria can get onto cutting boards and countertops. Sanitize all surfaces with hot, soapy water, and frequently wash kitchen cloths.

Avoid pink meat
Rule of thumb: You're never in the clear to eat rare or medium-rare beef, pork, veal, or lamb that is ground. The internal temperature should reach 160° F, about medium done.

Sources: homefoodsafety.org, meatsafety.org, prevention.com, health.state.mn.us

on the surface, while the inside of the meat is essentially sterile). However, according to the U.S. Food Safety and Inspection Service, about 10.5 percent of steaks undergo a process called mechanical or needle tenderization, in which metal blades or pins puncture the meat before packaging. While this technique improves the meat's texture, it also moves bacteria from the surface to the center. Steaks that have undergone this process are not labeled, and cooking them only to rare or medium rare may not kill the dangerous pathogens inside.

HIGHEST RISK

Chicken

Contaminated chicken sickens more people than any other affected meat, partially because we eat so much of it but also because of the way it's prepared, says Smith DeWaal. Commercial chicken plants typically dip meat in several baths before packaging, giving bacteria opportunity to spread. It's also hard to cook away bacteria in chicken. "Chicken has creases and folds in the skin," she says. "Pathogens can hide in those folds."

Ground Beef

Pathogens on the surface of the meat are spread throughout when it is ground. And if that ground meat isn't properly cooked—say, in the center of a rare burger—germs get a free ride into your digestive tract. R

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Grilled Corn, 5 New Ways

BY ERIN PHRANER
FROM *GOOD HOUSEKEEPING*

■ **PIZZAIOLA SPREAD:** Grate 2 vine-ripe tomatoes, seeded, using a coarse box grater; strain and press out all excess liquid. Stir in 2 tbs. finely grated Parmesan cheese, 1 to 2 tsp. finely chopped basil, and ¼ tsp. salt. Spread on corn.

■ **TOASTED SESAME BUTTER:** Stir together 4 tbs. salted butter, softened; 1 tsp. white sesame seeds; ½ tsp. finely chopped cilantro; and ¼ tsp. toasted sesame oil. Spread on corn; sprinkle with more sesame seeds.

■ **MEXICAN-STYLE STREET CORN:** Spread low-fat mayonnaise on still-warm corn. Roll in ½ cup crumbled Cotija or feta cheese. Sprinkle with chili powder. Serve with lime wedges for squeezing.

■ **GARLIC–OLD BAY BUTTER:** Stir together 4 tbs. salted butter, softened; 1 small clove garlic, pressed; and ¼ tsp. Old Bay Seasoning. Spread on corn.

■ **BACON-CHEDDAR:** Spread low-fat mayonnaise on still-warm corn. Roll in ½ cup grated Cheddar cheese and 5 strips cooked bacon, chopped. R

FOOD STYLIST: JAMIE KIMM

PHOTOGRAPH BY TRAVIS RATHBONE

"Don't Reprimand Him Harshly"

BY SUSAN SONTAG FROM *REBORN: JOURNALS AND NOTEBOOKS*

THE WRITER SUSAN SONTAG gave birth to her son, David Rieff, in 1952. After his mother died in 2004, David found this still-relevant list of parenting tips, written when he was seven, in one of her journals.

1. Be consistent.

2. Don't speak about him to others (e.g., tell funny things) in his presence.

3. Don't praise him for something I wouldn't always accept as good.

4. Don't reprimand him harshly for something he's been allowed to do.

GETTY IMAGES

5. Daily routine: eating, homework, bath, teeth, room, story, bed.

6. Don't allow him to monopolize me when I am with other people.

7. Always speak well of his pop (no faces, sighs, impatience, etc.).

8. Do not discourage childish fantasies.

9. Make him aware that the grown-up world is none of his business.

10. Don't assume that what I don't like to do (bath, hair wash), he won't like either. R

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0310119-021515

When the warehouse prices are worth it and when they're probably not

Big-Box Shopping

BY KELSEY KLOSS

Buy These

■ PRESCRIPTION DRUGS

When *Consumer Reports* called more than 200 pharmacies nationwide for prices on a month's supply of commonly prescribed drugs, it found a 450 percent difference in costs between the highest- and lowest-priced stores. Drugs at big-box-store pharmacies were much cheaper than those at many drugstore chains, especially if you opt for generics. Plus, you don't need a membership—warehouse pharmacies are required by law to remain open to the public.

■ CEREAL

Stock up on the warehouse version that comes in two large bags to a pack. You can save 60 percent on favorites such as Froot Loops and Honey Nut Cheerios by buying in bulk. Even organic cereals can cost 25 percent less at warehouse clubs.

PHOTOGRAPH BY TRAVIS RATHBONE

FOOD STYLIST: JAMIE KIMM

PET SUPPLIES

Certain brands of dog food can be up to 60 percent less expensive at a warehouse compared with popular pet stores, so it pays to comparison shop for your pooch's favorite kibble.

LIQUOR

Some warehouse clubs have partnerships with vineyards that award them deeply discounted prices for bulk purchases—which means you can save about 30 percent on certain wines. Warehouse store brands of other liquors, like Kirkland vodka, can cost nearly 40 percent less than premium brands like Grey Goose. Depending on your state laws, you may not need a membership to purchase liquor at a club store.

MEN'S DRESS SHIRTS

Clothing is often deeply discounted but still of good quality at big-box stores. We've seen men's dress shirts at a warehouse store for 30 percent less than at popular retailers.

CHARCOAL

Though it comes in large quantities—typically two 20-pound bags packaged together rather than a single five- to ten-pound bag—charcoal is usually less expensive at warehouse stores than at supermarkets. During grilling season, you're likely to use it up quickly. Even if you don't, charcoal has an indefinite shelf life if stored in a cool, dry place.

Skip These

OVER-THE-COUNTER MEDICINE

You probably don't use OTC medications every day, so that jumbo bottle of pain reliever might expire before you can finish it. Choose a regular-size bottle of a generic brand at your local drugstore or supermarket.

CLEANING SUPPLIES

Liquid cleaners typically lose some effectiveness after six months to a year (certain powders may have an indefinite shelf life if stored in a cool, dry place). Unless you have a large family, purchase household supplies like window cleaner, dish detergent, laundry soap, and bleach in regular-size containers at retail stores.

PAPER GOODS

Common household items go on sale so often that supermarket discounts may be deeper than warehouse price cuts. Pairing store sales with manufacturer coupons can dramatically shrink your bill.

MEAT

Supermarkets rotate sales on various meats so shoppers will come for the cheap prices and then buy more profitable packaged goods. Manager markdowns are also often available when meat nears its expiration date.

Sources: Andrea Woroch, a consumer savings expert; Jeanette Pavini, a savings expert at coupons.com; Trae Bodge, senior lifestyle editor for the Real Deal blog at retailmenot.com; consumerreports.org; kiplinger.com; goodhousekeeping.com; today.com; womansday.com; thecouponproject.com; and thedailymeal.com

ALL IN

A Day's Work

"I'm afraid I can't treat you, Mr. Fisk. I have a conflict of interest."

THE QUESTION WE HATE having to answer at our family-owned restaurant is "What's good tonight?" Obviously, we would never serve anything we didn't think was good. So I braced myself one night when I heard the dreaded question posed to my husband.

He calmly replied, "Anything over $17.95."

From gcfl.net

EARLIER THIS YEAR, sports editor Robert Cessna received two e-mails from an irate reader. The first excoriated him for leaving out the fact that the Texas A&M women's basketball team was playing that day.

"We seriously need more attendance," she wrote, "so how in the world does our local newspaper not mention that?" She wasn't through.

ILLUSTRATION BY J. C. DUFFY

"There are words sufficient to show how irritated I am, but I chose not to use them." She then signed it, "Upset Reader."

Soon after, Upset Reader sent her second e-mail: "Sorry. I was reading last week's paper." Source: myaggienation.com

CLIENT: The blue looks OK, but it would be great if it was a little more orange. Like "blorange."

Source: clientsfromhell.net

A LONDON COMMUTER hurrying to a job interview pushed and cursed a man on a crowded subway—the man who was to conduct the interview. Our commuter didn't get the job, so the *Week* asked its readers to title a career-advice book he might write:

■ *Mind the Gap Between Brain and Mouth* **JOE VALETTI**

■ *I'll Take This Job and Shove You* **LESLEY HAMMER**

■ *The Advantages of Working from Home* **BILL O'MEARA**

AMONG THE QUESTIONS on the job-application forms I handed out at our factory was one asking whom to notify in case of an accident. One job seeker wrote, "Anybody in sight."

JACK WORTHINGTON,
Foxborough, Massachusetts

MY STYLE IS "dress for the job you want," and the job I want is unemployed independently wealthy eccentric recluse. **@BEHINDYOURBACK**

HOW TO MAKE AN IMPRESSION AT YOUR NEXT MEETING

Translate percentages into fractions: If someone says that "25 percent of people clicked on this button," quickly chime in with "So about one in four," and make a note. Everyone will nod in agreement, secretly impressed.

Ask the presenter to go back a slide: Do this at any point in the presentation, and you'll look like you're paying closer attention than anyone else.

Nod continuously while pretending to take notes: Always bring a notepad with you. Take notes by writing down one word from every sentence you hear. Nod continuously while doing so.

Encourage everyone to "take a step back": There comes a point in most meetings when everyone is chiming in, except you. This is a great point to say "Guys, guys, can we take a step back here?" Followed by a quick "What problem are we trying to solve?" You've just bought yourself another hour of looking clever.

Source: sadanduseless.com

Make an impression by getting your funny work story into *Reader's Digest* ... and get paid! Go to rd.com/submit for details.

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Year-round warmth is a luxury that might affect your body weight and your health

Does Global Warming Make Me Look Fat?

BY JAMES HAMBLIN, MD FROM THE *ATLANTIC*

DURING MICHAEL PHELPS'S 2008 Olympic gold-medal streak in swimming, Ray Cronise, a former materials scientist at NASA, heard the widely circulated claim that Phelps was eating 12,000 calories a day. Phelps's intake was many thousands of calories more than what most elite athletes need. Running a marathon burns only about 2,500 calories. Phelps would have to have been aggressively swimming during every waking hour to keep from gaining weight. But then Cronise figured it out: Phelps must have been burning extra calories simply by being immersed in cool water.

Fascinated, Cronise began a regimen of cold showers and shirtless walks in winter. When he began measuring his metabolism during and after cold exposure, he found that his body was burning a tremendous amount of energy. He lost 26.7 pounds in six weeks.

His findings have helped drive a theory gaining momentum among scientists: that people can harness environmental thermodynamics in pursuit of weight loss. Because the human body uses energy to help maintain a normal temperature, exposure to cold expends calories.

Cronise's preliminary experiments led him to put together what is now a pretty high-tech lab in his Huntsville, Alabama, home, where he conducts miniature scientific studies, mostly on himself. All of this has attracted publicity—and criticism. Detractors have raised concerns about regularly exposing one's skin to cold (Cronise shared these worries). Some even accused him of

PROP STYLIST: SARAH GUIDO-LAAKSO FOR HALLEY RESOURCES

PHOTOGRAPH BY CLAIRE BENOIST

diverting people away from solid principles of weight management and toward dubious shortcuts.

To the contrary, Cronise believes that his weight-loss story has been misunderstood and may distract people from the important issue of nutrition. "You can't freeze yourself thin," he told me. But his interest in altering metabolism through exposure to mild cold—which he defines as 55 to 65 degrees Fahrenheit—has only grown. Such temperatures are far enough below the socially accepted range that people plunked into a 50-something-degree office would complain to no end.

Unless, maybe, they believed it was good for them.

A Double Whammy: Overfed and Overheated

The notion that thermal environments influence human metabolism dates back to studies conducted in the late 18th century by the French

chemist Antoine Lavoisier, but only in the past century has it really become relevant to daily life. Cronise believes that our thinking about obesity and metabolic diseases like diabetes doesn't address the fact that most people are rarely cold today. Many of us live almost constantly in environments above 70 degrees Fahrenheit. When we are somewhere colder, most of us quickly put on a sweater or turn up the thermostat.

We don't really experience seasonal variations in temperature the way our ancestors did. Even people in tropical regions used to get cold on rainy nights, Cronise pointed out, in a quick rejoinder to my observation that not all parts of the world have four seasons. Most other species display clearly ingrained biological responses to the seasons; why would humans be any different?

A recent article Cronise coauthored with scientists Andrew Bremer and David Sinclair proposes what the trio calls the Metabolic Winter hypothesis: Obesity is only in small part due to lack of exercise and mostly due to a combination of chronic overeating and chronic warmth. Seven million years of human evolution were dominated by two challenges: food scarcity and cold. "In the last 0.9 inches of our evolutionary mile," they write, pointing to the fundamental lifestyle changes brought about by refrigeration and modern transportation, "we solved them both." Other species don't exhibit nearly as much obesity and disease as we warm, overfed humans and our pets do.

In June 2014, Francesco Celi, a National Institutes of Health researcher, published a study that found that when people cool their bedrooms from 75 degrees to 66 degrees, they gain brown fat, which burns calories to generate heat. (Brown fat is considered good; white fat, by contrast, stores calories.) Another 2014 study found that, even after controlling for diet, lifestyle, and other factors, people who live in warmer parts of Spain are more likely to be obese than people who live in cooler areas.

Harnessing the Power of Chill

Cronise is currently testing whether, with a low-calorie diet and a cool environment, he can maintain a healthy weight and low body-fat ratio without going to the gym. He doesn't turn on the heat in his home until the coldest days of winter, which at times means letting the indoor temperature dip into the 50s. He trained himself to sleep without blankets.

Even on the hottest nights, I feel like I need the weight of a blanket, or at least a sheet, to sleep. Cronise was able to wean himself from blankets gradually, by learning to sleep with them first folded down partway, and then folded farther, and then, eventually, all the way down to his feet.

But Cronise is more reasonable

than his anti-blanket rhetoric might suggest. Mild cold exposure might be as simple as forgoing a jacket when you're waffling over whether you need one, not layering cardigans over flannels, or turning off the space heater under your desk.

And there are devices like the Cold Shoulder, an ice vest invented by Wayne Hayes, an associate professor at the University of California at Irvine who was inspired by Cronise's research. Hayes claims that wearing it for an hour burns up to 250 calories, though his data are very rough. A little more than a year ago, he began selling the vest out of his Pasadena apartment. (Name notwithstanding, people won't ignore you when you wear it.)

"The first time you put it on, it's a bit shocking, to be honest," Hayes warned me. But after wearing it a few times, he said, most people barely notice it. (That was my experience.) Hayes recommends wearing the vest twice a day until the ice melts—which can take an hour or longer—though he has himself worn it as many as three or four times in a single day.

"If you buy more than one," he said, drifting into salesman mode and only half kidding, "you can cycle them throughout the day and wear them every waking hour." R

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Surprisingly healthy updates for simple treatments you're likely already using

Kitchen Remedies Take on New Roles

BY LAUREN GELMAN

Cranberry Juice

■ **TRADITIONAL USE:** Stave off a urinary tract infection.

■ **NEW USE:** Lower blood pressure. In a study presented at a meeting of the American Heart Association, people who drank low-calorie cranberry juice daily for two months saw an average drop of three points in blood pressure (experts say even a small drop can benefit your ticker); a group who drank a placebo beverage had no change in their BP numbers. The potent antioxidants in cranberries have been linked to lower blood pressure in other research.

Honey

■ **TRADITIONAL USE:** Soothe a cough or a sore throat.

■ **NEW USE:** Calm a canker sore. In a Saudi Arabian study, people who dabbed honey on these irritating sores had less pain and healed faster than those who used other treatments (a steroid cream and an over-the-counter canker sore paste that forms a protective barrier). After two days, the people who used honey reported that their pain was completely gone; it took up to eight days for users of the other treatments to feel better. Researchers suspect that honey's anti-inflammatory and antimicrobial properties help ease pain and promote wound healing.

Lemon Juice

■ **TRADITIONAL USE:** Highlight hair.

■ **NEW USE:** Prevent kidney stones. The same potent citric acid that makes lemons good hair lighteners also reduces calcium excretion and may help prevent kidney

PROP STYLIST: ROBIN FINLAY

PHOTOGRAPH BY ADAM VOORHES

stones from forming. If you're prone to them, drink a glass of lemonade (made from actual lemon juice, with little added sugar) daily.

Ginger

■ **TRADITIONAL USE:** Relieve nausea.
■ **NEW USE:** Lower blood sugar.
A go-to remedy for seasickness and pregnancy morning sickness, this fragrant spice may help people who have diabetes or who are at risk of developing it. In an Iranian study, people who were randomly selected to take a ginger powder supplement (two grams a day) for 12 weeks had lower levels of blood sugar and blood fats linked to inflammation compared with those who received a placebo. Ginger may inhibit an enzyme that's linked to raising blood sugar.

Red Wine

■ **TRADITIONAL USE:** Protect against heart disease.
■ **NEW USE:** Fight cavities.
A lab study published in the *Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry* found that red wine (with or without alcohol) eliminated the kind of bacteria that contributes to tooth decay. Researchers think it's a combination of wine's antioxidants and the fact that it "sticks" to your teeth, which gives it time to effectively destroy germs. R

ADVERTISEMENT

Help protect your grandchildren by getting a whooping cough vaccination

Whooping cough is a highly communicable disease that can have serious complications for infants 6 months or younger. Make sure you get immunized before seeing your new grandchild.

Before you meet your new grandchild, make sure you don't have a low-grade fever or runny nose and are free from coughs and sneezes.

Most infants get infected with whooping cough by those around them, including grandparents. These babies are at the greatest risk for serious complications, and in rare cases even death, especially within the first 6 months of life. About half of the children younger than 12 months of age who get whooping cough are hospitalized.

Everyone around babies should have their whooping cough vaccination up to date. So get immunized today. Walgreens has over 27,000 specially trained healthcare professionals who can administer immunizations.

And there's never been a better time to protect yourself and the ones you love. With Walgreens Get A Shot. Give A Shot®. program, you'll not only be helping your family, but also children all over the world*.

Together with the United Nations Foundation's Shot@Life campaign, Walgreens is helping to provide lifesaving vaccines to children in need. So for every shot you get, a child around the world can get a lifesaving immunization as well*.

Stop by your neighborhood Walgreens today and talk to your healthcare professional about the importance of getting your whooping cough vaccination and keeping your grandchildren safe when you visit.

Did You Know?

- Only **15.6%** of 19-64 year olds reported getting a whooping cough shot in the last 7 years[1]
- Only **25.9%** of 19-64 year olds living with an infant reported getting a whooping cough shot in the last 7 years[1]
- Only **8%** of 65+ year olds reported getting a whooping cough shot in the last 7 years[1]

*Donation currently valid for non-flu vaccinations. Aggregate donation of up to $1 million. Vaccines subject to availability. State-, age- and health-related restrictions may apply.

[1] (included in a Tetanus shot) Noninfluenza Vaccination Coverage Among Adults- United States, 2012" from the CDC at www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6305a4.htm#Tab1

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Copies of forms? Late-night phone calls? What you do—and don't—have to pay for.

Can My Doctor Charge Extra For That?

BY ORLY AVITZUR, MD FROM *CONSUMER REPORTS ON HEALTH*

SHOULD I BE BILLED FOR CALLS AND E-MAILS WITH MY DOCTOR? Not usually. When insurance pays for an appointment, follow-up is considered part of the original visit. But if you were to phone months later about something else, you could be charged. Medicare suggests that doctors advise patients of those charges in advance.

DO I HAVE TO PAY FOR COPIES OF MY HEALTH RECORDS? Yes. The Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) lets providers covered by it charge a "reasonable, cost-based fee" for making protected health information available. Charges may include costs for photocopying, supplies, postage, and preparing a summary (rather than a full record). This also applies to forms for camp and school physicals and those for disability, gym releases, and family medical leave. But it's unethical for a doctor to withhold records because of an unpaid balance.

AM I RESPONSIBLE FOR PAYMENT IF I DON'T SHOW UP? Yes. No-show rates range from 5 to 55 percent, an inconvenience that has prompted many practices—with the blessing of Medicare and other insurers—to charge patients who fail to cancel appointments within a specified window (usually 24 hours). I know many doctors who request credit card information before the first visit and notify new patients of that policy, telling them to call or e-mail to cancel. R

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Ensure TAKE LIFE IN.

NEWS FROM THE

World of Medicine

BY KELSEY KLOSS

Healthiest Bedtime Reading Habits

During a two-week study, Brigham and Women's Hospital researchers assigned 12 participants to read either an e-book on an iPad or a printed book before they went to sleep each evening for five nights. Then they switched formats and read for another five nights. When people read on the iPad, they took longer to fall asleep and spent less time in REM sleep than with the traditional books. Researchers say using devices that emit blue light—including cell phones and laptops—before bedtime can have negative long-term health effects.

Walk Off a Sugar Craving

In an Austrian study, about 50 overweight participants walked for 15 minutes on a treadmill one day and remained sedentary another day. In both cases, they were given a test designed to trigger stress and were asked to unwrap candy but not eat it. After walking, participants reported fewer cravings during the test and while holding the candy than when they didn't walk.

The Bacteria In a Smooch

How much do you share in a kiss? Dutch researchers tracked how kissing affected the oral bacteria of 21 couples. They asked one person in each pair to consume a probiotic yogurt drink with specific bacterial strains (to track the spread of germs) and then to share a ten-second kiss with his or her partner. The average kiss transferred as many as 80 million bacteria. Sound icky? Not quite. Experts say exposure to someone else's bacteria could help strengthen your immunity.

PROP STYLIST: ROBIN FINLAY

PHOTOGRAPH BY ADAM VOORHES

Preterm Delivery Linked To Heart Risks

Women who experience spontaneous preterm delivery (before 37 weeks) may have a greater likelihood of heart disease, according to a new Dutch study. Moms of preemies had a 38 percent higher risk of coronary artery disease, a 71 percent higher risk of stroke, and more than double the risk of overall heart disease. Researchers say these women may be prone to inflammation, which is linked to preterm delivery and common among heart disease patients.

New Diet Plan for Diabetes

People with diabetes are often told to eat six small meals throughout the day, but fewer, bigger meals may be better, according to a new study. Czech researchers analyzed data from a previous study comparing two diets in 54 people with type 2 diabetes. Participants ate six small meals per day for 12 weeks, then a large high-fiber breakfast and lunch (but no dinner) for 12 weeks. When they ate two meals a day, they reported feeling less hungry, lost more weight, had lower blood sugar, and noted stark improvements in mood.

A Little Grandparenting Sharpens the Mind

Spending the right amount of time caring for grandchildren can keep the mind sharp, according to an Australian study of 186 older women. Grandmothers who watched their grandchildren one day a week did better on cognitive tests than those who cared for grandchildren more often or not at all. Though the exact reason is unclear, researchers will continue to study how social engagement affects elder acuity.

Open Up with Laughter

British researchers divided 112 students into three groups and asked each group to watch a short video together (without talking). One was a comedy routine, another was about golf, and a third showed nature scenes. Students then wrote a message about themselves to someone else. People who laughed more shared markedly more intimate information than those who did not. Laughter affects the release of endorphins, which increase someone's likelihood of revealing more intimate information, researchers say.

Sleep and Success

The National Sleep Foundation recommends getting seven to nine hours of sleep every night, but a recent survey of 1,400 people, conducted by United Kingdom–based market research firm YouGov, found that many successful people sleep far less. Investor Donald Trump reports three to four hours, President Barack Obama reports six hours, and records show that Thomas Edison slept for four to five hours each night.

Is your **BLADDER** calling the shots?

Talk to your doctor about Myrbetriq® (mirabegron), approved by the FDA to treat overactive bladder (OAB) symptoms of:

Urgency

Frequency

Leakage

In clinical trials, those taking Myrbetriq made fewer trips to the bathroom and had fewer leaks than those not taking Myrbetriq. Your results may vary.

TAKING CHARGE OF YOUR OAB SYMPTOMS STARTS WITH TALKING TO YOUR DOCTOR.

Visit **Myrbetriq.com** for doctor discussion tips. Ask your doctor if Myrbetriq may be right for you, and see if you can get your first prescription at no cost.*

*Subject to eligibility. Restrictions may apply.

Important Safety Information

Myrbetriq may cause your blood pressure to increase or make your blood pressure worse if you have a history of high blood pressure.

Please see additional Important Safety Information on next page.

Use of Myrbetriq (meer-BEH-trick)

Myrbetriq® (mirabegron) is a prescription medicine for adults used to treat overactive bladder with symptoms of urgency, frequency, and leakage.

Important Safety Information (continued)

It is recommended that your doctor check your blood pressure while you are taking Myrbetriq. Myrbetriq may increase your chances of not being able to empty your bladder. Tell your doctor right away if you have trouble emptying your bladder or you have a weak urine stream.

Tell your doctor about all the medicines you take including medications for overactive bladder or other medicines such as thioridazine (Mellaril® and Mellaril S®), flecainide (Tambocor™), propafenone (Rythmol®), digoxin (Lanoxin®).* Myrbetriq may affect the way other medicines work, and other medicines may affect how Myrbetriq works.

Before taking Myrbetriq, tell your doctor if you have liver or kidney problems. In clinical studies, the most common side effects seen with Myrbetriq included increased blood pressure, common cold symptoms (nasopharyngitis), urinary tract infection and headache.

Please see Brief Summary of Prescribing Information for Myrbetriq on the following pages.

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch, or call 1-800-FDA-1088.

Myrbetriq®
(mirabegron)
extended-release tablets
25 mg, 50 mg

astellas

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astellas

Myrbetriq® (mirabegron) extended-release tablets 25 mg, 50 mg

Brief Summary based on FDA-approved patient labeling
Read the Patient Information that comes with Myrbetriq® (mirabegron) before you start taking it and each time you get a refill. There may be new information. This summary does not take the place of talking with your doctor about your medical condition or treatment.

What is Myrbetriq (meer-BEH-trick)?
Myrbetriq is a prescription medication for **adults** used to treat the following symptoms due to a condition called **overactive bladder**:
- urge urinary incontinence: a strong need to urinate with leaking or wetting accidents
- urgency: a strong need to urinate right away
- frequency: urinating often

It is not known if Myrbetriq is safe and effective in children.

What is overactive bladder?
Overactive bladder occurs when you cannot control your bladder contractions. When these muscle contractions happen too often or cannot be controlled, you can get symptoms of overactive bladder, which are urinary frequency, urinary urgency, and urinary incontinence (leakage).

What should I tell my doctor before taking Myrbetriq?
Before you take Myrbetriq, tell your doctor if you:
- have liver problems or kidney problems
- have very high uncontrolled blood pressure
- have trouble emptying your bladder or you have a weak urine stream
- are pregnant or plan to become pregnant. It is not known if Myrbetriq will harm your unborn baby. Talk to your doctor if you are pregnant or plan to become pregnant.
- are breastfeeding or plan to breastfeed. It is not known if Myrbetriq passes into your breast milk. You and your doctor should decide if you will take Myrbetriq or breastfeed. You should not do both.

Tell your doctor about all the medicines you take,
including prescription and nonprescription medicines, vitamins, and herbal supplements. Myrbetriq may affect the way other medicines work, and other medicines may affect how Myrbetriq works.

Tell your doctor if you take:
- thioridazine (Mellaril® or Mellaril-S®)*
- flecainide (Tambocor™)
- propafenone (Rythmol®)
- digoxin (Lanoxin®)

How should I take Myrbetriq?
- Take Myrbetriq exactly as your doctor tells you to take it.
- You should take 1 Myrbetriq tablet 1 time a day.
- You should take Myrbetriq with water and swallow the tablet whole.
- Do not crush or chew the tablet.
- You can take Myrbetriq with or without food.
- If you miss a dose of Myrbetriq, begin taking Myrbetriq again the next day. Do not take 2 doses of Myrbetriq the same day.
- If you take too much Myrbetriq, call your doctor or go to the nearest hospital emergency room right away.

What are the possible side effects of Myrbetriq?
Myrbetriq may cause serious side effects including:
- **increased blood pressure.** Myrbetriq may cause your blood pressure to increase or make your blood pressure worse if you have a history of high blood pressure. It is recommended that your doctor check your blood pressure while you are taking Myrbetriq.
- **inability to empty your bladder (urinary retention).** Myrbetriq may increase your chances of

not being able to empty your bladder if you have bladder outlet obstruction or if you are taking other medicines to treat overactive bladder. Tell your doctor right away if you are unable to empty your bladder.

The **most common side effects** of Myrbetriq include:
- increased blood pressure
- common cold symptoms (nasopharyngitis)
- urinary tract infection
- headache

Tell your doctor if you have any side effect that bothers you or that does not go away or if you have hives, skin rash or itching while taking Myrbetriq.

These are not all the possible side effects of Myrbetriq.

For more information, ask your doctor or pharmacist.

Call your doctor for medical advice about side effects. You may report side effects to the FDA at 1-800-FDA-1088.

How should I store Myrbetriq?
- Store Myrbetriq between 59°F to 86°F (15°C to 30°C). Keep the bottle closed.
- Safely throw away medicine that is out of date or no longer needed.

Keep Myrbetriq and all medicines out of the reach of children.

General information about the safe and effective use of Myrbetriq
Medicines are sometimes prescribed for purposes other than those listed in the Patient Information leaflet. Do not use Myrbetriq for a condition for which it was not prescribed. Do not give Myrbetriq to other people, even if they have the same symptoms you have. It may harm them.

Where can I go for more information?
This is a summary of the most important information about Myrbetriq. If you would like more information, talk with your doctor. You can ask your doctor or pharmacist for information about Myrbetriq that is written for health professionals.

For more information, visit **www.Myrbetriq.com** or call (800) 727-7003.

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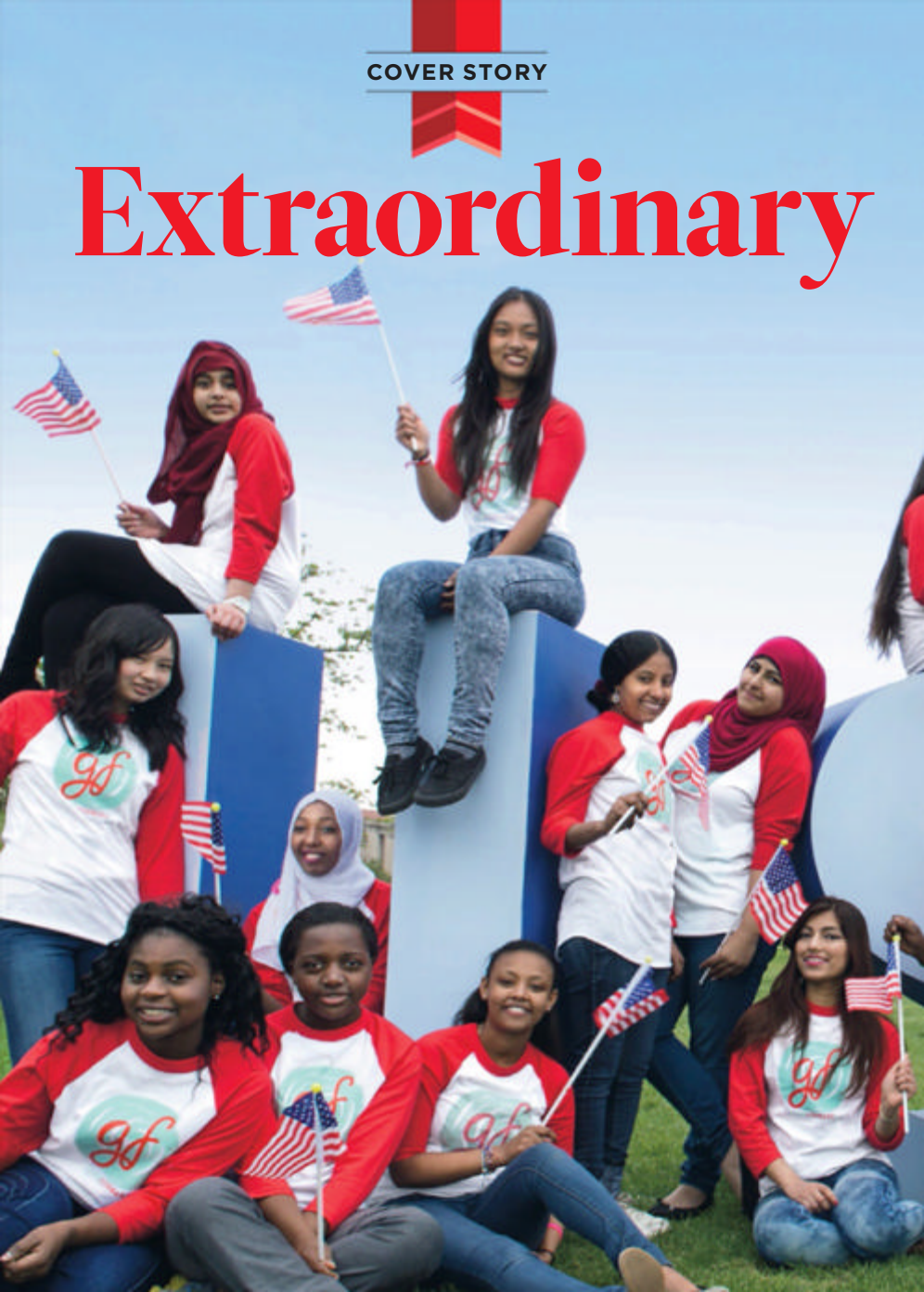


America

Meet the everyday heroes who make our country great

PHOTOGRAPHS BY
GLENN GLASSER

Reader's Digest ***photographed Blair Brettschneider (far right) with some of the young ladies of GirlForward at the National Mall in Washington, DC.***

A Girl's Best Friend

BLAIR BRETTSCHNEIDER, *Chicago, Illinois*

A real-life Lady Liberty lights the way for refugee teens

Being the new girl in town is tough. Blair Brettschneider (shown, previous spread) learned this when she moved to Chicago to work at a refugee resettlement agency. But it's not as hard as being the new girl in America. Five years ago, she was tutoring Domi, 18, who had lived in a Tanzanian refugee camp before coming to the United States. Domi wanted to be a nurse, but she was struggling in school and with family demands. Brettschneider went to her home to meet with her. And she realized that there must be many other displaced, disoriented teen girls among the thousands of refugees relocated in Illinois every year. "I just hadn't seen them," Brettschneider says.

She hosted weekly meet-ups for Domi and nine other refugee girls; they'd practice English, play games, and talk. For Domi, the group was life-changing: She graduated from high school and enrolled in nursing school.

The meet-ups blossomed into GirlForward, which pairs refugees ranging in age from 12 to 21 with American mentors and hosts a summer camp to prepare teens for their first year of high school in the United States. Brettschneider, 26, takes girls on regular field trips, and "every year, we go ice-skating," she says. "They're afraid of falling, and they have to learn to be brave and trust that nobody will let them get hurt." Taking that first step can be tricky—but the girls know that Brettschneider always has their back.

The Flower Bearer

LARSEN JAY, *Knoxville, Tennessee*

Yes, laughter is the best medicine—but a beautiful bouquet comes close

Seven years ago, Larsen Jay (opposite) nearly died when his ladder collapsed during a do-it-yourself project. He broke his left arm, right elbow, wrists, nose, and femur and fractured his skull. His first days in the trauma center were bleak. But after loved ones filled Jay's room with bouquets, his mood lifted. "I'd never been given flowers before, and it was a big emotional shift for me," he says.

His wife wheeled him through the halls, and he was dismayed to see other patients' "lifeless, flowerless" rooms. Jay took the cards off his blooms and went door-to-door, delivering the flowers. "I wanted to give people the same boost I had," he says.

A year later, Jay and his wife founded Random Acts of Flowers. Reception halls, funeral homes, and other venues donate bouquets to a central spot in cities with RAF chapters (Knoxville, Tampa, and Chicago). Volunteers use them to craft fresh arrangements, which go to hospitals, nursing homes, and rehab facilities. The group has distributed more than 65,000 vasefuls of joy, and Jay still makes deliveries. "I've never had it not result in a smile," he says.

PREVIOUS SPREAD: HAIR AND MAKEUP: KIM REYES FOR T-H-E ARTIST AGENCY

Larsen Jay's company is as green as it gets—it recycles old bouquets.

Jen Leary cares for creatures like these puppies who were rescued from a fire.

The Fire Fighter

JEN LEARY, *Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*

After the flames of disaster die down, she ensures no pet is left behind

The first call came at 5 a.m. "Good morning, Jen," the Red Cross operator said. "We have a fire for you." Six dogs were homeless after they and their owners were displaced by a blaze in North Philly. The situation was exactly why Jen Leary (opposite) had founded Red Paw Emergency Relief Team, a nonprofit that rescues and fosters pets and reunites them with families after fires, gas leaks, and other catastrophes. Red Paw launched at midnight on July 25, 2011; it took barely five hours for Leary to receive her first call.

"I've always been the person who sees a problem and needs to fix it," Leary explains. A firefighter for seven years and a volunteer Red Cross responder for nine years, she was disturbed by how animals were lost, forgotten, or neglected in the wake of disaster. "People had to leave them in a burned house, take them to a shelter, or let them go on the street," she says.

Leary retired from the fire department in 2014 to devote herself to Red Paw, which has helped save more than 2,000 pets. She initially fosters many of them at home with her five cats, two dogs, and turtle named Rabbit. Her 500 volunteers include veterinarians, transporters, and foster care providers. "I remember vividly how happy the family and the dogs were to be back together," Leary says, thinking back to Red Paw's first rescue. "It's what makes this job meaningful."

A Family of Neighbors

BRIDGE MEADOWS, *Portland, Oregon*

An innovative community brings out the best in every member

In 2010, when Jackie Lynn, then 55, decided to be a foster parent for two great-nieces and one great-nephew, she was overwhelmed by the love. But she was also blindsided by the stressful work of raising three kids. "It was a nightmare," she says. A year later, she found the help she needed when she moved to Bridge Meadows, a nonprofit development. "I've made some of the best friends, and my children have kids to play with and 'grandparents' who care for them," she says. "It's like having a huge family."

Bridge Meadows houses only low-income seniors and families with multiple foster kids. The scheme benefits three generations: parents, who receive support; children, who gain loving, stable adults; and seniors, who feel a renewed sense of purpose. Nine families, including 27 foster children and 30 senior citizens, live in the cluster of townhomes and apartments.

Senior residents—or elders, as they're called—must spend at least 400 hours every year helping the families. "I have a great amount of delight in my life from the kids that I wouldn't have otherwise," elder Joy Corcoran says. When Corcoran was sick, a young friend made her muffins. Twice a week, she and a 12-year-old neighbor go to water aerobics. "When I want to back out, she won't let me," Corcoran laughs.

The Good Shepherd

JOHN HELLE, *Dillon, Montana*

A rancher's work reflects a life fueled by pride in America

As you read this, John Helle (opposite) is prepping for a 50-mile ride into the Gravelly Mountains with his parents, his oldest son, and 5,000 sheep and lambs. Every July, Helle, a third-generation rancher, herds his flock to their summer pastures in an annual rite he has observed since childhood. The sole wool provider for Duckworth—a wool manufacturer he co-owns and the only one that keeps its entire supply chain within U.S. borders—Helle is trying to revive our country's garment-making heritage.

According to Duckworth president Robert Bernthal, the number of sheep in Montana plunged from more than four million in 1970 to fewer than 300,000 today, due largely to manufacturing moving abroad. "Our way of life has been lost over the generations," Helle says. From his Montana ranch, the wool is transported to the Carolinas, where it is spun into yarn and knit or sewn into garments that end up on the backs of outdoorsmen like Helle and his neighbors.

The ranch's 20 employees—who include his parents, brother, uncles, and four children—shear about 10,000 sheep a year. Like their ancestors, they herd their flocks on horseback and sleep in classic sheep wagons in the summer months. "Two hundred years ago, people would think nothing of getting in covered wagons and heading west to find opportunities," Helle says. "They all survived; of course, they probably wore a lot of wool."

Bold Businessmen

JOHN AND TOM D'ERI, *Parkland, Florida*

Mixing compassion and savvy, they've created dozens of jobs and a new kind of workplace

When Andrew D'Eri turned 18 in June 2012, he looked for a job, but nobody would hire him—he has autism (more than 80 percent of people with autism worldwide are unemployed). His brother, Tom, and father, John, sprang into action, and they didn't just get him a job; they created a workplace that lets him and his peers shine.

The D'Eris wanted to find a business that would draw on the capabilities of people with autism, who often excel at detail-oriented, process-driven tasks. A car wash seemed a good fit. In 2012, the D'Eris bought an existing establishment, shuttered it, trained new employees in a 46-step routine, and reopened in April 2013. "Business has tripled," says Tom, 26. Of the 43 employees at Rising Tide Car Wash, 35 have autism. "The work gives them a tremendous boost in self-esteem," says John, 56. "They see they can do a good job and provide for themselves."

The D'Eris credit their success to the meticulous work of their employees. In the beginning, says Tom, customers came to the car wash to support its mission. "Now they tell us the job is so thorough, they won't go anywhere else, *and* it's awesome what we do."

John Helle has lived on this 25,000-acre Montana ranch since he was one.

Human dynamo Charlotte Tidwell gave out more than 600,000 pounds of food in 2014.

Town Provider

CHARLOTTE TIDWELL, *Fort Smith, Arkansas*

Decades ago, some nuns changed a little girl's life—now it's payback time

When Charlotte Tidwell (opposite) was in first grade, the nuns at school made a bargain: If she helped her mother clean the building after class, she could attend for free. The sisters' kindness would ripple through Tidwell's life—from being accepted as one of three African Americans in her nursing program and becoming Sparks Hospital's director of medical nursing to founding a charity with which she feeds more than 7,000 people a month in her hometown.

Fort Smith was once a thriving manufacturing town, but it never recovered after its factories started to close in 2000. When Tidwell heard some elderly were eating cat food out of desperation, she started handing out groceries from a truck. A former boss connected Tidwell with an investor, who gave her the building where her group, the Antioch Consolidated Association for Youth and Family, is based.

Tidwell, 69, and her volunteers work ten-to-12-hour shifts at the warehouse Monday to Friday. On Saturdays, they bring food and other sustenance to senior housing complexes. Once, while escorting kids to sing at a home, she saw a man crying. He was reminded that his radio was broken, so Tidwell returned later with a new radio. "The greatest satisfaction is to watch others grow with compassion," she says. "I see volunteers transformed, and it makes me know we can get back to a community of caring I grew up with."

The Principal and the Prankster

SHERMAN PADGETT AND EMILY JONES, *Wichita, Kansas*

A high school senior turns a snarky event into a gesture of appreciation

At 9:30 a.m. on Friday, February 27, North High School principal Sherman Padgett stood in the hall. The band and cheerleaders marched through, and as the enthusiastic educator does for pep rallies, Padgett wore a cape and tights à la movie wrestler Nacho Libre. Senior Emily Jones, 17, asked him to hold a bucket. Aware it was senior-prank season, he grumpily declined. In his office, he saw the receptacle on his desk. "What's with the bucket?" he asked his secretary. "Oh, just hold it," she said.

Padgett took the container back to his spot in the hall, and students started dropping in pieces of paper. Later, he read the 100 messages, which included: "Thank you for the shirt you gave me. When I didn't have clothes, you provided," "The thing I like about you is that you're always so happy and positive," and simply, "I love you."

Jones and two friends had asked all the seniors to write notes to tell Padgett what he'd meant to them. The principal confessed he got a bit teary. "I thought, Man, this is better than a paycheck," he said in a CNN interview. "This is why I do the things that I do."

The Pizza Man

MASON WARTMAN, *Philadelphia, Pennsylvania*

A simple idea—and sticky notes—turns people into superheroes

It's easy to be hypnotized by the hundreds of bright sticky notes on the walls of Rosa's Fresh Pizza—especially when you start reading them.

"You're worthy of more than a slice," an orange one says. "Make pizza, not war," adds a yellow. A sheet of white paper stands out: "I just want to thank everyone that donated to Rosa's. It gave me a place to eat every day and the opportunity to get back on my feet. I start a new job tomorrow!"

The message wall at Rosa's started a few months after Mason Wartman (opposite) opened the pizzeria, in December 2013. "A customer read that we serve a lot of homeless people, and he asked if he could buy a slice for the next one who came in," he says. "I took his dollar, wrote a note to remind myself there was a slice outstanding, and stuck it on the wall." Other diners followed suit, and within a week, two dozen sticky notes were hanging up. When the number hit 500, Wartman started keeping track of the slices at the register, but the wall had already taken on a life of its own. Today, it's a communal board where people post notes of thanks given and received.

Wartman estimates that Rosa's has doled out more than 18,000 free slices in just over a year. "Homeless customers offer to sweep up and take out the trash to thank me," he says. "I've hired three employees through shelters. They're hard workers looking for a chance, and that's who I want here."

The Librarian

SCOTT BONNER, *Woodson Terrace, Missouri*

In a town engulfed by turmoil, a quiet hero emerges

Scott Bonner was new in Ferguson last summer and wanted to know everyone in town. Soon he would.

In August 2014, Bonner was settling into his job as library director when the community ruptured after 18-year-old Michael Brown was shot to death by a police officer. Protesters and looters massed in the streets, schools and businesses closed, but the library remained open. "Libraries are all about helping people and communities better themselves," Bonner says. "I wanted to regret saying yes too much instead of saying no too much."

For one week in August, the building became the unofficial town center. Teachers and volunteers set up an improvised school for hundreds of displaced students, and local leaders held emergency meetings there. Bonner placed a sign outside, urging, "Stay Strong, Ferguson. We Are Family."

In November, riots erupted again, and the library continued to be a safe haven. When a visitor walked up to the librarian, gripped his hands, and cried, Bonner—who was a former mental health professional—knew he'd found another way to put out fires. Following press coverage, the library received more than $400,000 in donations, doubling its annual budget.

Mason Wartman used to work in finance; now he helps those who can't afford to eat.

Judy Gascon was looking for a way to give back to our troops when she heard the VA needed volunteer pianists.

The Patriotic Pianist

JUDY GASCON, *Boring, Oregon*

Her days at the VA lift vets' spirits—and pay loving tribute to her father

It's Tuesday at 9 a.m. Dressed in an authentic World War II Army uniform and with her hair coiled in a 1940s-era liberty roll, Judy Gascon (opposite) sits at a baby grand piano in the lobby of the Veterans Administration Hospital in Portland, Oregon. She begins with the songs from the five military branches and then turns to smile at the patients waiting for their appointments. "Any requests?"

For 12 years, she has played patriotic tunes and American classics—"Take Me Out to the Ballgame" is a favorite—while wearing her late father's ribbons and patches on her jacket. He was in the Army Air Corps in World War II, and though "he didn't talk a lot about himself," she says, she knew he was proud of his service. He moved in with her in 2001 after being diagnosed with Alzheimer's and died shortly after she began volunteering at the VA.

With a chair on either side, she welcomes vocal accompaniment—"You don't want to hear me sing," she laughs—and conversation. "The vets feel comfortable telling me stories of the war, ones they wouldn't tell their own families," says Gascon, 67. "It's a bit like being a bartender." She looks forward to playing at the VA too much to consider stopping. "Other than raising my son, there's nothing I've done that I like more than this," she says. "It's so rewarding to see the light in people's eyes when they hear their song."

High Achievers

TOMMY CALDWELL, *Estes Park, Colorado*
KEVIN JORGESON, *Santa Rosa, California*

How do you conquer one of the last frontiers? Seven years of practice, a solid partnership, and Krazy Glue.

Sleeping 1,000 feet in the air was not new to Tommy Caldwell—he was used to the extreme shifts in temperature, the bone-rattling 70 mph winds, and being strapped into a bed. But one day in 2000, during a climbing trip in Kyrgyzstan, Caldwell, then 21, and his friends were awakened by an unfamiliar sound: gunfire.

They were being kidnapped by Islamic militants. After days without food or water, Caldwell seized on an opportunity, pushed a captor off a cliff, and fled 18 miles to safety. (Caldwell later learned that the man survived.)

This led to a big realization—"We are capable of more than we could imagine," he says—and to tackling a feat that was said to be impossible: the first free climb of the 3,000-foot, sheer granite Dawn Wall of El Capitan in Yosemite National Park. (In a free climb, only one's hands and feet are used to ascend; harnesses are solely for protection.) Caldwell had free-climbed 12 different routes up El Cap, six of which had never been done before, but the Dawn Wall, the peak's southeastern face, thwarted him.

Out of the blue, climber Kevin Jorgeson e-mailed Caldwell; he too was looking for a challenge. For ➤

three months a year over seven years, Caldwell and Jorgeson kept returning to Yosemite to puzzle along their serpentine route through the wall's 32 pitches, or climbing segments. Storms came and went, and so did most of the skin on their fingers (they applied Krazy Glue as a protectant), but the men persevered. "I refused to be the guy who almost climbed the Dawn Wall," says Jorgeson.

Several times, they attempted a free climb—but each time, they failed. Then, on December 28, 2014, the men pushed out yet again, relying on cracks as thin as a razor blade and holds as small as a dime. In the mornings, they dined on bagels; at night, they sipped whiskey. Nineteen days later, on January 14, they completed their epic quest.

"I've known the wall longer than I've known my wife," Caldwell says. "The pursuit itself was the prize."

The Birder

WALTER FULLER, *Ojai, California*

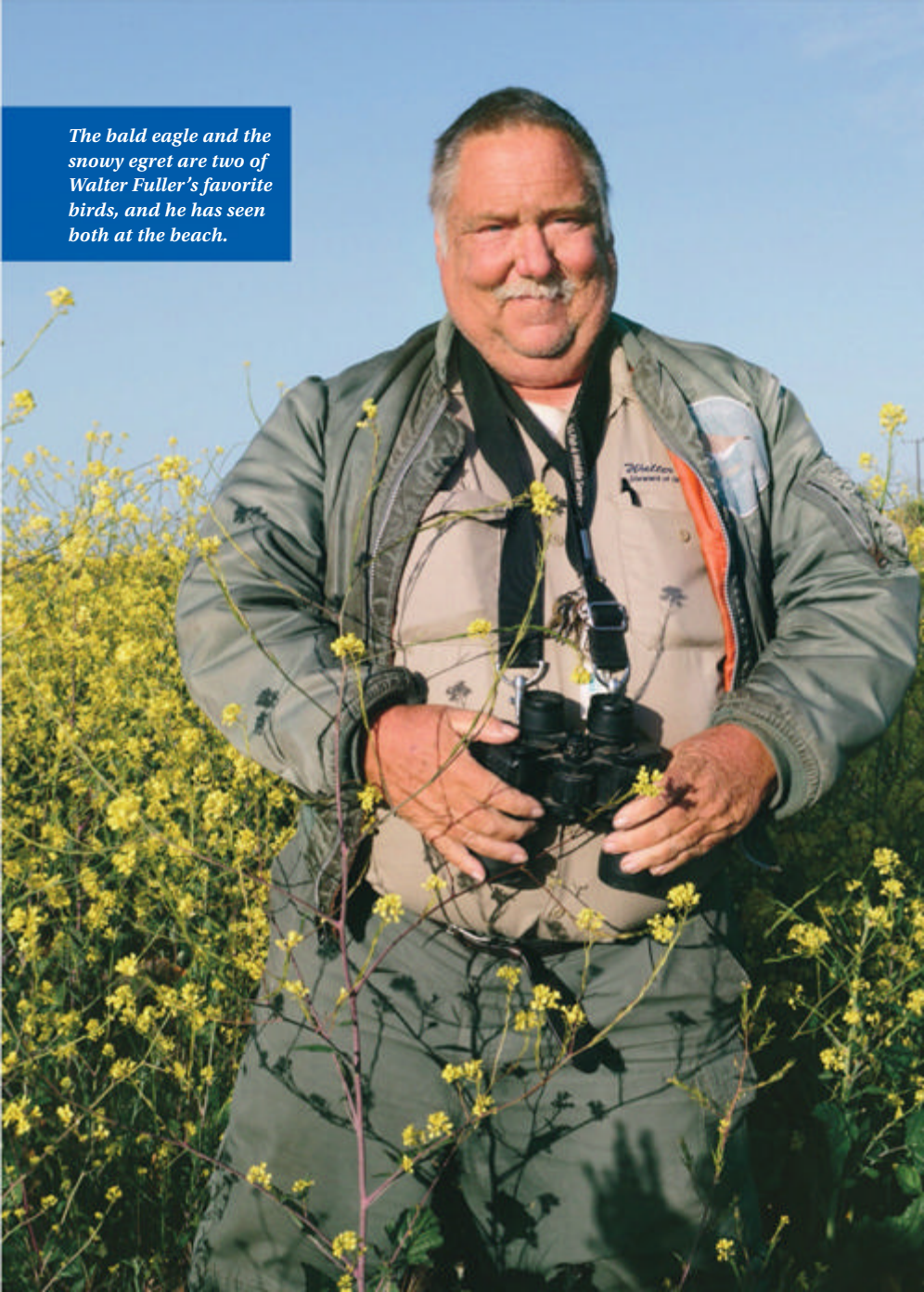
One man sees beauty under the blight—and brings a beach back to life

Walter Fuller (opposite) awakens at 4:30 a.m. every day to unlock the parking lot at Ormond Beach, where he has served as its unofficial (and unpaid) security guard, park ranger, custodian, and tour guide for 18 years. For Fuller, the work serves as its own reward: Fishers, surfers, and fellow birders greet him as he logs their comings and goings for his daily report; children marvel when he shows them their first up-close view of the Pacific Ocean; and white-crowned sparrows follow him while he refills their feeders. With about 250 avian species flying through every year, the two-mile strip of wetlands is a birder's dream. But it wasn't like that when Fuller found it.

A lifelong bird lover, he first visited Ormond Beach in 1996 on a lunch break from his job at the nearby Navy base. He saw mallard ducks, finches, hawks, and herons—but barely any people around to enjoy them. The beach had become a dumping ground for trash and a hub of drug deals and gang activity, and Fuller realized if he didn't take care of the spot, nobody would. He began going there after work, clearing the sand of old tires, mattresses, and sludge and patrolling the parking lot.

After he was laid off from the Navy base, he went to the beach every day, often sleeping in his truck in the lot to dissuade troublemakers from coming at night. The beach became a safe place, human visitors gradually began returning, and in 2008, Oxnard city officials took notice of the solitary widower and provided him with a metal shipping container to sleep in. Last year, they upgraded him to a trailer. His official title is caretaker, but he prefers the language on the metal sign outside his trailer: "Walter Fuller—steward of Ormond Beach."

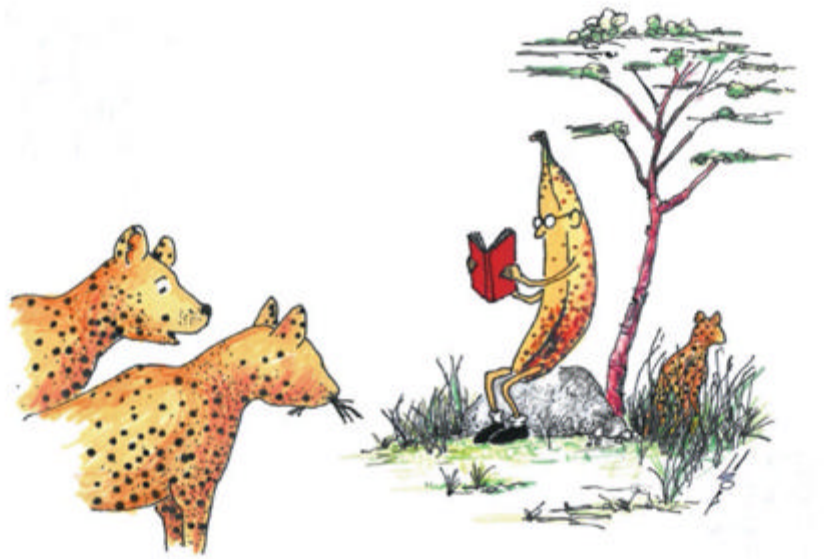
"In 1996, nobody felt safe out here," Fuller says. "Now we get up to a hundred visitors a day. They say, 'We're coming back because you're here.' That makes my heart grow."



The bald eagle and the snowy egret are two of Walter Fuller's favorite birds, and he has seen both at the beach.

Laughter

THE BEST MEDICINE



"I'm telling you, Larry ... he's not one of us ..."

A MAN KNOCKED on my door and asked for a donation toward the local swimming pool. So I gave him a glass of water.

Comedian **GREG DAVIES**

TWO LITTLE BOYS are in a hospital, lying on gurneys next to each other. "What are you in for?" asks one.

"I'm here to have my tonsils taken out," the second replies.

"Don't worry," the first says. "I had that operation when I was four. They put you to sleep, and when you wake up, you get ice cream."

The other boy, now relieved, asks, "What are you here for?"

"A circumcision."

"Whoa, good luck. I had that done when I was born, and I couldn't walk for a year."

Submitted by **KATHY VALENTA,** *Chesterfield, Michigan*

ILLUSTRATION BY LEO OUELLETTE

"?!?!?!?!?!?!?!?!?!?!!"
—Dogs on the Fourth of July

@KYLE_LIPPERT

AFTER ARRIVING LATE to the Tower of London and to Buckingham Palace, the tour group finally arrived at Runnymede. The guide announced, "On this very spot, the historic Magna Carta was signed."

A woman asked, "When was that?"

The guide said, "1215."

"I knew it," said the woman. "We missed it by 15 minutes."

Submitted by **HELEN RUSS,** *Medford, Oregon*

I LIKE MY MEN LIKE I LIKE MY ...

Sweatpants—Warm. Resilient. Covered in cookie crumbs.
Babies—Adorable. Potty trained. With a nice crib.
Knives—Easy to handle. Clean-cut. In the kitchen.
Cheese—Sharp. Good with wine. Easily molded.
Books—Novel. Unpredictable. With a spine.

SARA K. RUNNELS, from mcsweeneys.net

Your funny joke, list, or quote might be worth $$$. Go to page 7 or rd.com/submit.

MODERN CURSES

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Preparing for an event in the Old Family Dining Room, under the watchful eyes of Frances Cleveland, the 23rd first lady

Confessions of the

Touching stories from the people with a front-row seat to history

White House Staff

BY KATE ANDERSEN BROWER FROM *THE RESIDENCE: INSIDE THE PRIVATE WORLD OF THE WHITE HOUSE*

JIMMY CARTER CALLED THE STAFF at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue "the glue that holds the house together." Jackie Kennedy once remarked that a particular chief usher was "the most powerful man in Washington, next to the president." The impact of the hundreds of men and women who have served as maids, valets, florists, and chefs to first families is legendary—and inestimable.

For the workers, the spotlight isn't the point. Rising at dawn—and sometimes staying awake until the wee hours to perfect pastries and give massages—the residence staff sacrifice their personal lives to serve. Here, their remembrances from inside the White House describe small acts of kindness and episodes of humor, anger, and despair—and reveal personal quirks and preferences of presidents and their families from the Kennedy administration to the present day.

A PRESENT FOR MALIA

BOB SCANLAN, the White House assistant chief florist from 1998 to 2010, wanted the Obamas to have a special first Christmas in the White House. He put boxwood Christmas trees on Malia's dresser and on Sasha's mantel. When Scanlan went into Malia's room to check on the tree, he found a note: "Florist: I really like my tree. If it's not too much to ask, could I please have lights on it? If not, I understand." Her sign-off was a heart. "Now, you tell me," he said to the Flower Shop staff. "How could I not put lights on that tree?"

PASTRIES FOR NANCY

AN INCIDENT with Nancy Reagan still haunts former executive pastry chef Roland Mesnier. Two days before an April 1982 state dinner, Mesnier was previewing desserts with the first lady. Mrs. Reagan rejected three options, and Mesnier returned to the kitchen feeling dejected.

"Then the phone rang, and she asked me to come back upstairs to see her," says Mesnier.

She told Mesnier that she had decided she wanted elaborate sugar baskets with three sugar tulips in each one. He would have to make 15 baskets for the dinner, each of which would take several hours.

"Mrs. Reagan, this is very nice and very beautiful, but I have only two days left until the dinner," Mesnier told her.

She smiled and tilted her head to the right: "Roland, you have two days and two nights before the dinner."

Mesnier dug in and worked day and night. After the state dinner, when he knew the first lady was happy with the result, he drove home elated. He had met the challenge.

PREVIOUS SPREAD: SAMANTHA APPLETON/COURTESY THE WHITE HOUSE

President Obama outside the South Portico of the White House

PETE SOUZA/COURTESY THE WHITE HOUSE

RONNIE IN THE BUFF

IVANIZ SILVA, a maid from 1985 to 2008, spent most of her time in the family's inner sanctum on the second and third floors. Usually things ran like clockwork, with the maids keeping track of the whereabouts of the president and the first lady so that the staff could go in and work without disturbing them. But one evening, Silva was in President Reagan's bedroom after 5:30 p.m., turning down the bed and closing the curtains. When she went into the bedroom's sitting room, "there he was, naked, with papers all around him!" she says. She rushed out of the room blushing before the president had time to say a word. He must have been as surprised as she was.

Later, she passed him in the hallway. Reagan looked at her with a twinkle. "Hey, who was that guy?" he asked.

FLOWERS FOR JIMMY

THE FIRST FAMILY may live in the White House for free, but they're billed monthly for other expenses such as food and dry cleaning. Jimmy Carter wanted his flowers on the cheap, even though the first family doesn't usually pay for flowers, says Ronn Payne, a White House florist from 1973 to 1996. "We had to go out and pick flowers for dinners," he remembers. Payne and other staffers took field trips to Rock Creek Park to pick daffodils and the National Zoo to

collect wildflowers. "Police would stop us. One guy was arrested," Payne says. The White House intervened to get him released.

THE WHITE HOUSE STAFF BY THE NUMBERS*

96 full-time employees

250 part-time employees

1 social secretary: acts as a conduit between the first family and the residence staff and supervises seating for state dinners and other formal events

8 ushers: manage the residence budget, house maintenance, and staff scheduling

6 butlers: serve the first family in their private living quarters and guests at formal receptions and dinners

6 florists: create unique arrangements that suit the first family's style

3 calligraphers: handwrite invitations for all formal White House events

3 valets: act as the president's personal assistants

13 grounds crew: maintain the 52 acres that include the White House grounds and adjoining park

1 chief curator: oversees the collections of art, furniture, and decorative objects used to furnish the residence

*Numbers are approximate.

BOWLING WITH RICHARD

BEFORE WATERGATE, President Nixon was well liked among the staff, although most of them agree that he and his family were much more formal and stiff than their predecessors. Chef Frank Ruta tells a story about the congenial pot washer Frankie Blair, who was a fixture in the kitchen. One night, Blair was cleaning up after the first family had finished dinner. Nixon wandered into the kitchen, and somehow they started talking about bowling—Nixon was such an avid bowler that he had a single-lane bowling alley installed in the basement under the North Portico. Nixon asked Blair if he would play with him, and the two of them bowled until two in the morning. "There may have been a bottle of Scotch involved as well," Ruta adds.

After they wrapped up, Blair turned to the president and said, "There is no way my wife is going to believe I was out this late bowling with you."

"Come with me," Nixon told him.

The two walked to the Oval Office, where the president wrote a note apologizing to Blair's wife for keeping him out so late.

FLYING WITH THE NIXONS

FORMER USHER Nelson Pierce also remembers happy times with the Nixons before Watergate. When Pierce found out that the president and his wife were traveling to the

White House staff and First Lady Michelle Obama look into the State Dining Room.

SAMANTHA APPLETON/COURTESY THE WHITE HOUSE

Seattle area, where he'd been born, he told the first lady how much he missed the snowcapped mountains of the Northwest. Not long after that, Mrs. Nixon asked him to join them.

"The president's secretary gave me the flight map," Pierce recalls, and he studied it carefully, "trying to figure out what I would see, what I would recognize. But the closer we got to Washington, the less I was seeing." Then, just as Pierce was getting his bearings, "all of a sudden, we made a sharp bank to the right, and of course I saw Mount Adams, Mount St. Helens, Mount Baker, and Mount Rainier ... I knew that somebody had asked the pilots to go that way so I could see the mountains."

LYNDON'S MASSAGES

EVERY NIGHT, President Lyndon Johnson would get a massage in his living quarters. When former usher Nelson Pierce was on night duty, he would wait downstairs until the Navy chief came to tell him the president had gone to bed, at which point he was free to leave. Every once in a while, Pierce recalls, the president would fall asleep on the table, and the chief would have to sit down and wait until Johnson woke up so he could finish the massage.

"It was three, four, sometimes even five in the morning before we'd leave work," Pierce says, without a hint of resentment in his voice.

JOHN AND THE CAN OPENER

JOHN AND JACKIE Kennedy were hopeless in the kitchen, says Anne Lincoln, the White House housekeeper at the time. "The president loved soup before he went to bed," she says. "We had a can opener on the second floor, [but] I think it took him about eight months to learn how to use it." R

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BY PETE HAMILL FROM THE *NEW YORK POST*

I HEARD THIS STORY FROM A GIRL I'D MET IN NEW YORK CITY. The girl told me that she had been one of the participants. Since then, others have said that they had heard a version of it in some forgotten book or been told it by an acquaintance who said that it had actually happened to a friend. Probably the story is one of those mysterious bits of folklore that emerge from the national subconscious every few years, to be told anew in one form or another. The cast of characters shifts; the message endures. I like to think that it did happen, somewhere, sometime.

ILLUSTRATION BY TATSURO KIUCHI

Going HOME

What would the message on the great oak be?

They were going to Fort Lauderdale—three boys and three girls—and when they boarded the bus, they were carrying sandwiches and wine in paper bags, dreaming of golden beaches and sea tides as the gray cold of New York vanished behind them.

As the bus passed through New Jersey, they noticed Vingo. He sat in front of them, dressed in a plain, ill-fitting suit, never moving, his dusty face masking his age.

Deep into the night, outside Washington, the bus pulled into a Howard Johnson's, and everybody got off except Vingo. The young people began to wonder about him, trying to imagine his life: Perhaps he was a sea captain, a runaway from his wife, an old soldier going home. When they went back to the bus, one of the girls sat beside him and introduced herself.

"We're going to Florida," she said brightly. "I hear it's beautiful."

"It is," he said, as if remembering something he had tried to forget.

"Want some wine?" she said. He smiled and took a swig. He thanked her and retreated again into his silence. She went back to the others, and Vingo nodded in sleep.

In the morning, the girl sat with Vingo again, and after some time, he told his story. He had been in prison in New York for the past four years, and now he was going home.

"Are you married?"

"I don't know."

"You don't know?" she asked.

"Well, when I was in the can, I wrote to my wife," he said. "I told her that I was going to be away a long time and that if she couldn't stand it, if the kids kept askin' questions, if it hurt too much, well, she could just forget me. I'd understand. Get a new guy, I said—she's a wonderful woman, really something—and forget about me. I told her she didn't have to write me or nothing. And she didn't. Not for three and a half years."

"And you're going home now not knowing?"

"Yeah," he said shyly. "Well, last week, when I was sure the parole was coming through, I wrote her again. We used to live in Brunswick, just before Jacksonville, and there's a big oak tree just as you come into town. I told her that if she'd take me back, she should put a yellow handkerchief on the tree, and I'd get off and come home. If she didn't want me, forget it—no handkerchief, and I'd go on through."

"Wow," the girl said. "Wow."

She told the others, and soon all of them were in it, caught up in the approach of Brunswick, looking at the pictures Vingo showed them of his wife and three children—the woman handsome in a plain way, the children still unformed in the cracked, much-handled snapshots.

Now they were 20 miles from Brunswick, and the young people took over window seats on the right side, waiting for the approach of the great oak tree. The bus acquired a dark, hushed mood, full of the silence of absence and lost years. Vingo stopped looking, tightening his face into the ex-con's mask, as if fortifying himself against still another disappointment.

Then Brunswick was ten miles, and then five. Then, suddenly, all the young people were up and out of their seats, screaming and shouting and crying, doing small dances of exultation. All except Vingo.

Vingo sat there stunned, looking at the oak tree. It was covered with yellow handkerchiefs—20 of them, 30 of them, maybe hundreds, a tree that stood like a banner of welcome billowing in the wind. As the young people shouted, the old con rose from his seat and made his way to the front of the bus to go home. R

This article first appeared in the January 1972 issue of *Reader's Digest.*

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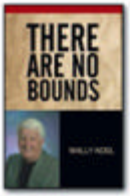

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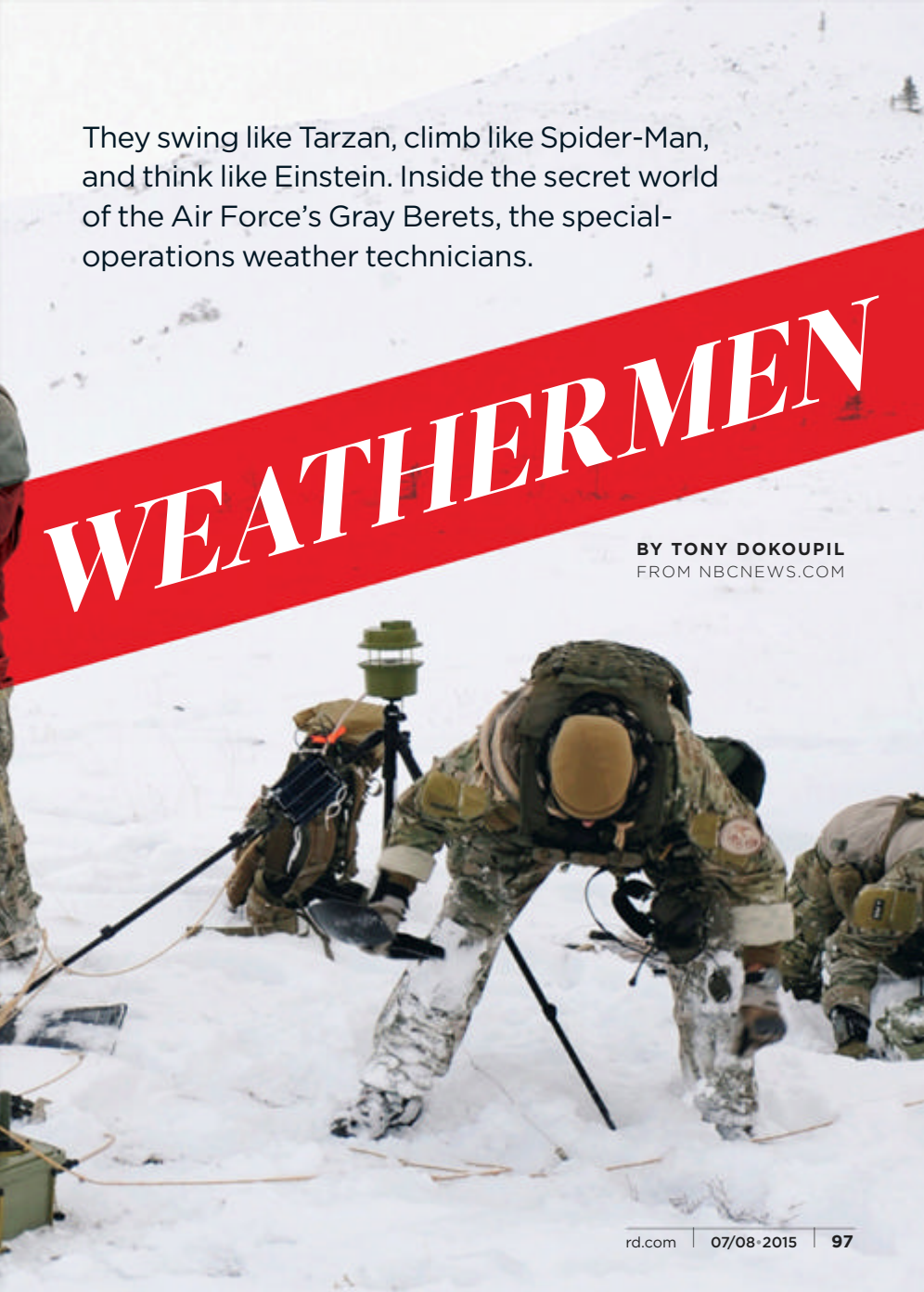
SEND IN THE

A military weather team "reads" the conditions at the Joint Pacific Alaska Range Complex.

They swing like Tarzan, climb like Spider-Man, and think like Einstein. Inside the secret world of the Air Force's Gray Berets, the special-operations weather technicians.

WEATHERMEN

BY TONY DOKOUPIL
FROM NBCNEWS.COM



On a moonless night in October 2001, an American helicopter lifted off from an air base in Uzbekistan, banking south on a covert mission into Afghanistan. Inside was one of our country's most elite and unknown special operators, hand-selected for a job so important that the war on terror hinged on his success.

He was a weatherman.

More precisely, he was a special-operations weather technician, or SOWT (pronounced "'sow-tee"). As the Department of Defense's only commando forecasters, SOWTs gather mission-impossible data from the most hostile places. They embed with Navy SEALs, Delta Force, and Army Rangers. Ahead of major operations, they head in first for a go/no-go forecast—America's parachutes don't pop until a SOWT gives the all clear.

The Gray Berets, as they're called because of their storm-colored headgear, have been around since World War II. Over the years, their mission has been stymied by a tangled chain of command, inconsistent training, and a requirement that all SOWTs begin as desk meteorologists. But that has changed. In 2008, after a rash of weather-related accidents, the Air Force created 1WXOS, the first official class of commando weathermen. This allowed Air Force Special Operations Command to expand recruiting and send applicants through a new two-year training pipeline, the longest in the Department of Defense.

SOWTs were on the ground ahead of the raid that killed Osama bin Laden, and their work has also helped capture pirates, free hostages, and bring humanitarian relief. They read the sky in Haiti ahead of some of the first air drops after the earthquake in 2010 and in the Philippines after Typhoon Haiyan in 2013. Their ranks have tripled in recent years, with more growth expected, signifying the deepening relationship between the military and its combat forecasters.

"The weather is going to make or break a mission before it even takes off," said Dusty Lee, a superintendent for Air Force Special Tactics.

TO GET THE GROUND TRUTH

When the Taliban seized power in Afghanistan in 1996, it granted sanctuary to Al Qaeda and ruled by a strict interpretation of the Koran: no TV or movies, mandatory burkas for women and beards for men—and no weather reports. To the Taliban, forecasting was sorcery. They fired the country's meteorologists and burned all the climatological archives, creating a blind spot in weather data, which is typically pooled and shared by the world's governments.

As the Pentagon geared up to send

PREVIOUS SPREAD: AIRMAN 1ST CLASS WILLARD E. GRANDE II/AIR FORCE/COURTESY NBC

troops into Afghanistan, it felt it had found a fix in SOWTs like Brady Armistead, jump-ready scientists with the guts to forecast the weather behind enemy lines. In October 2001, Armistead sat in an Air Force helicopter while it rumbled toward the desert 80 miles south of Kandahar. The pilot approached the drop zone, and he pulled his aircraft into a hover, letting Armistead fast-rope 60 feet down into a void. He was accompanied by a small team of Air Force combat controllers who were trained in seizing airfields and managing aerial traffic.

By dawn, they'd traversed several kilometers of sand, scaled a mountain, and dug in to a ledge. In the following days, Armistead used laser range finders for cloud height, night-launched weather balloons for upper atmospheric data, and a pocket meteorological wand for everything else. This comprised his daily "nowcast," which he compared with computer predictions. He wanted an operational window as close as possible to clear skies, moderate temperatures, calm winds, and air dense enough to support flight. By day three, he felt ready.

As night fell on October 19, a thousand miles away, General Dell Dailey, head of Joint Special Operations Command, asked for final word from the front. "Conditions favorable," Armistead wrote in a text message.

"Roger," replied Dailey. "Force will launch."

So began the ground war in Afghanistan. The Army Rangers seized an airfield and erected Camp Rhino, the first American base in the country. The mission also marked a new era for meteorologists like Armistead, who serve as the guardians of both unmanned aircraft and commandos in low-flying helicopters. While satellites can supply atmospheric data, combat meteorologists liken the quality of that information to shaking a box to guess what's inside. "We get the ground truth," said Armistead.

WARRIORS FIRST, METEOROLOGISTS SECOND

For SOWTs-in-training, morning comes early. Long before the sun bobs up, their trucks and cars are lined at the main gate of Hurlburt Field, the home of Air Force Special Operations Command on the Florida Panhandle. Their workouts start at 7 a.m. Even at this hour, SOWTs are expected to read the skies. Forgot to roll up your windows on a rainy day? You owe the team 1,000 push-ups. Blow an outlook for chilly weather? You aren't allowed to go home for your coat.

SOWTs don't just predict the weather—they leverage it. They learn to use the morning dew to erase a platoon's tracks or the wind to muffle a helicopter or the shadow of a

mountain to shelter the wounded. They also watch for obstacles and opportunities, cataloging where the soil is soft, the rivers are swift, the snow is loose, or the fog is dense. With their reports, they can make America a home-turf warrior in any country. "We're human sensors, and that's the magic of the SOWTs," said Major Jonathan Sawtelle, who was the SOWTs' director of operations until last year.

Let's be honest. There is something a bit comical about sending a meteorologist to war. The image of the ordinary forecaster is of a second-rate scientist who spends his life indoors, predicting the outdoors—and usually getting it wrong. But the new SOWTs, and the best of the old ones, are a different breed. They are warriors first, meteorologists second.

"They're stronger, faster, and brighter than we ever were," said Master Sergeant Tony Carson, who came in under the old system. "The challenge now is pulling these guys back, not pushing them forward."

There are about 120 SOWTs spread across three Special Tactics teams, which also contain combat controllers and medics. These men—as of now, no women are SOWTs—represent a widening part of U.S. special operations, both in combat and in rescue efforts. And as extreme weather events increase in frequency, the Pentagon anticipates a greater number of relief and disaster-response missions.

"Can you attribute any given weather event to climate change? No," said Sawtelle. "But is Special Tactics there and ready to take action? Absolutely. We're a fast-reacting force, standing ready to respond to climate disasters."

PUSHING MINDS AND BODIES TO THE LIMITS

The SOWTs are a rare blend of brawn and brains. Their careers start with a standard military intelligence test. SOWTs need a minimum score that is 20 points higher than anyone else's in Air Force Special Tactics—and higher than that of almost every position in the military, other than code breakers.

They need the brainpower for forecasting school—30 weeks of advanced meteorology. There they have to unlearn as much as they learn. The "thin air" around us is, in fact, thick—dense enough to support flight. An object that is "as light as air" is, as a matter of science, exerting one ton of atmospheric pressure per square foot. And the SOWTs find that predicting the weather can be as hard as following a wave across the open seas or trying to predict the first bubble in a slowly boiling pot of water.

They're also taught that weather—and how the military works with it—can make or break a war. During the Revolutionary War, the Continental

Army used low clouds to hide from the British bayonets on Long Island. General George Washington crossed the Delaware in a blizzard, surprising the enemy and turning the war.

As a result, the military has always been one of meteorology's biggest patrons. Between 1870 and 1955, it launched the forerunner of the National Weather Service, opened the first graduate school of meteorology, and funded the first computer predictions. These days, the military is working to loop the entire world's data together so that it can create forecasts for all of Earth as a single entity.

But even if that goal is achieved, there will still likely be special-ops weather technicians. During training, they get a glimpse of their value when they're shown a nighttime picture of Earth. The cities glow, but between them, the land is largely dark, or "data sparse." What's the weather like in those regions? No one's sure.

This may come as a surprise to Americans, who are the world's most weather-wired people. We have about 10,000 professionally run surface reporting stations, which is the same amount as the rest of the world combined. We also have about 150 radar centers, while some regions of Africa have none. Asked to name the parts of the globe that lacked surface weather data, one researcher said, "The whole Southern Hemisphere, really." Insufficient or faulty ground data is a major reason why forecasts curdle within a week and go totally rancid after ten days. Even the most precise same-day satellite forecast is a spaghetti plot of best guesses and generalities, which won't do in war.

The physical side of SOWT training may be more demanding than the intellectual. It starts with a 500-meter surface swim, two 25-meter underwater swims, a 1.5-mile run, and timed bursts of pull-ups, sit-ups, and push-ups. Pass that, and would-be SOWTs qualify for a "selection course," a two-week cycle of spit and sweat. They jump off cliffs, run through rivers, drag tires, and perform calisthenics made torturous by a water hose in the face—anything that can trigger a fear of drowning.

"We're here to push them, to show them that their bodies and minds are capable of handling much more than they think," said an instructor in a SOWT recruiting video.

If the SOWTs manage to survive that hell, they'll find there are others waiting, including five kinds of survival school and a disaster-movie sequence of severe weather observations, tactical training, and demolition. Of those who enter the SOWT pipeline, fewer than one in five eventually receives the gray beret, said senior recruiter Lee. Recent recruits include wrestlers, water polo players, surfers, runners, and a lineman pulled off an NFL practice squad. The common denominator is a knack for tamping down the instinct to scream. "These guys are

certified mental and physical studs," said Sawtelle.

They're also deadly. Before they deploy, all SOWTs get a coat of battle paint at the Air Force's advanced combat training school. It's a gym, pool, and classroom complex, and on a recent visit, the facility felt like a stroll through the pages of a spy novel. Cell phones are locked in boxes, cinder blocks above the urinals are covered with one-pagers on countries in West Africa and Southeast Asia, and reminders about the need for strict security hang everywhere.

"Loose pieces of talk are put together by our enemies for victory," warns one poster.

In a warehouse across the street, the SOWTs keep their personal "cages": wire-mesh closets that are piled high with beef jerky and books. "Most guys read a lot," said Sawtelle. He pointed out a favorite: *The Art of War,* the Chinese military treatise attributed to Sun Tzu. "Know the weather," Sun Tzu advised around 320 BC. "Your victory will then be total."

Since Air Force special operators support Army, Navy, and Marine special operations detachments, SOWTs must have the guns, radios, and battle dress to join any team at any time. "We're behind every SOF [special-operations forces] mission," Sawtelle said. Still, not everyone in the military looks up to the Gray Berets. Some of the rougher soldiers don't always see their value. They prank the SOWTs, stuffing their bags or lockers with balloons. Others—too tough to worry about the weather or too young or inexperienced to realize they should—ignore them entirely.

HELPING BRING DOWN BIN LADEN

Gradually, SOWTs are changing their colleagues' minds. By the time Armistead dropped into Afghanistan, he had already earned a spot on the 24th Special Tactics Squadron (STS), the Air Force's version of SEAL Team 6 and Delta Force. (The Pentagon doesn't officially acknowledge any of these teams and neither does Armistead, but other senior military personnel confirmed STS 24's existence.) "Those guys were hot," remembers a member of Delta Force, who deployed with SOWTs and combat controllers in the fierce early months of the ground war in Afghanistan. "They could swing like Tarzan, think like Einstein, and climb like Spider-Man."

The military relied on SOWTs two years later when the United States invaded Iraq. At least three SOWTs infiltrated early. One landed in northeastern Iraq near Iran, where he watched the winds for signs of chemical warfare. Another entered in the south, surviving incoming missiles and a sandstorm that buried his sleeping bag. A third worked the center of the country to forecast clear skies for

a thousand paratroopers making the first major insertion of the war.

In a role that remains classified, SOWTs also deployed in support of Operation Neptune's Spear, the 2011 raid that killed Osama bin Laden, according to people familiar with that and similar SOWT missions. "I guarantee you there were guys out there," said one senior official. (Special Operations Command declined to comment directly, as did Sawtelle.) Because Pakistan's ground weather stations are spotty and far-flung, at least one SOWT was on the flight path in, while a second dug into the mountains surrounding Abbottabad to provide environmental "overwatch," according to military sources.

Lead instructor Sergeant Travis Sanford, 27, is a perfect example of the new breed of combat weathermen. He looks like G.I. Joe: a V-bodied six-footer blessed with a kung fu grip. In 2010 in Afghanistan, he grabbed a wounded Marine by his ankle, pulled him to safety, and earned a Bronze Star for valor.

Sanford likens the military to a giant high school social scene. The special operators are like starting quarterbacks and homecoming kids, but not the SOWTs. "We're kind of like the valedictorians," he said. "We've got the 4.0 grade point average, but we can play a little too." R

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NOTE: Ads were removed from this edition. Please continue to page 110.

Are We *Natural-Born* RACI

The writer was convinced he was color-blind until a simple test proved otherwise. The psychology of how we learn prejudice.

BY CHRIS MOONEY FROM *MOTHER JONES*

STS?

"You're not, like, a total racist," David Amodio tells me.

I'm sitting in the soft-spoken cognitive neuroscientist's spotless office, nestled within New York University's psychology department, but it feels like I'm at the doctor's office getting a dreaded diagnosis. On his giant monitor, Amodio shows me a big blob of data depicting where people score on the Implicit Association Test (IAT). The test measures racial prejudices that we cannot consciously control. I've taken it three times now. This time around, my uncontrolled prejudice, while clearly present, has come in significantly below the average for white people like me.

That certainly beats the first time I took the IAT. That time, my results showed a "strong automatic preference" for European Americans over African Americans. That was not a good thing to hear, but it's extremely common—51 percent of online test takers show moderate to strong bias.

The test asks you to rapidly categorize images of faces as either "African American" or "European American" while you also categorize words (like *evil, happy, awful,* and *peace*) as either "good" or "bad." Faces and words flash on the screen, and you tap a key, as fast as you can, to indicate which category is appropriate.

Sometimes you're asked to sort African American faces and "good" words to one side of the screen. Other times, black faces are to be sorted with "bad" words. As words and faces keep flashing by, you struggle not to make too many sorting mistakes.

And then suddenly, you have a horrible realization. When black faces and "bad" words are paired, you feel yourself becoming faster in your categorizing—an indication that the two are more easily linked in your mind.

You think of yourself as a person who strives to be unprejudiced, but you can't control these split-second reactions. As the milliseconds are being tallied up, you know the tale they'll tell: When negative words and black faces are paired, you're a better, faster categorizer. Which suggests that racially biased messages from the culture around you have shaped the very wiring of your brain.

We're not born with racial prejudices. We may never even have been "taught" them. Rather, explains University of Virginia psychologist Brian Nosek, prejudice draws on "many of the same tools that help our minds figure out what's good and what's bad." In evolutionary terms, it's efficient to quickly classify a grizzly bear

PREVIOUS SPREAD: EVAN KAFKA

as dangerous. The trouble comes when the brain uses similar processes to form negative views about groups of people.

But here's the good news: Research suggests that once we understand the psychological pathways that lead to prejudice, we just might be able to train our brains to go in the opposite direction.

OUR BRAIN IS A FILE CABINET

Dog, cat. Hot, cold. Black, white. Male, female. We constantly categorize. We have to. Sorting anything from furniture to animals to concepts into different folders inside our brains is something that happens automatically, and it helps us function. In fact, categorization has an evolutionary purpose: Assuming that all mushrooms are poisonous and that all lions want to eat you is a very effective way of coping with your surroundings. Forget being nuanced about nonpoisonous mushrooms and occasionally nonhungry lions—certitude keeps you safe.

But a particular way of categorizing can be inaccurate, and those false categories can lead to prejudice and stereotyping. Much psychological research into bias has focused on how people "essentialize" certain categories, which boils down to assuming that these categories have an underlying nature that is tied to inherent and immutable qualities.

Like other human attributes (gender, age, and sexual orientation, for example), race tends to be strongly—and inaccurately—essentialized. This means that when you think of people in that category, you rapidly or even automatically come up with assumptions about their characteristics. Common stereotypes with the category "African Americans," for example, include "loud," "good dancers," and "good at sports." Essentialism about any group of people is dubious—women are not innately gentle, old people are not inherently feebleminded—and when it comes to race, the idea of deep and fundamental differences has been roundly debunked by scientists.

Even people who know that essentializing race is wrong can't help absorbing the stereotypes that are pervasive in our culture. In polls, for example, few Americans admit holding racist views. But when told to rate the intelligence of various groups, more than half exhibited strong bias against African Americans. Even the labels we use seem to affect our level of prejudice: Another study found that test subjects associated the term *black* with more negative attributes—such as low socioeconomic status—than *African American.*

WE'RE HERD ANIMALS

Humans are tribal creatures, showing strong bias against those we perceive as different from us and favoritism toward those we perceive as similar.

In fact, we humans will divide ourselves into in-groups and out-groups even when the perceived differences between the specific groups are completely arbitrary.

In one study, subjects are asked to rate how much they like a large series of paintings, some of which are described as belonging to the "Red" artistic school and others to the "Green" school. Then participants are randomly sorted into two groups, red or green. In subsequent tasks, people consistently show favoritism toward the arbitrary color group to which they are assigned.

In other words, if you give people the slightest push toward behaving tribally, they'll happily comply. So if race is the basis on which tribes are identified, expect serious problems.

One simple evolutionary explanation for our tendency toward tribalism is safety in numbers. You're more likely to survive an attack from a marauding tribe if you join forces with your buddies. And primal fear of those not in the in-group also seems closely tied to racial bias.

Amodio's research suggests that one key area associated with prejudice is the amygdala, a small and evolutionarily ancient region in the middle of the brain that is responsible for triggering the notorious fight-or-flight response. In interracial situations, Amodio explains, amygdala firing can translate into anything from "less direct eye gaze and more social distance" to literal fear and vigilance toward those of other races.

RACISM'S EFFECT ON RACISTS

Prejudice often has an unintended consequence—it can interfere with how our brains function and make us less innovative. We're not talking about artistic creativity here but seeing beyond the constraints of traditional categories, or thinking outside the box.

Carmit Tadmor, a psychologist at the Recanati School of Business at Tel Aviv University, and her colleagues used a simple test in which individuals were asked to list possible uses for a brick. People who could think outside traditional categories—aside from being used in building, bricks make good paperweights, for example—score better. This study showed that people who essentialized racial categories tended to have fewer innovative ideas about a brick.

But that was just the beginning. Next, a new set of research subjects read essays that described race either as a fundamental difference between people (an essentialist position) or as a construct, not reflecting anything more than skin-deep differences (a nonessentialist position). After reading the essays, the subjects moved on to a difficult creativity test that required them to identify the one key word that united three seemingly unassociated words. Thus, for instance, if a subject was given the words *call,*

pay, and *line,* the correct answer was *phone.* Remarkably, subjects who'd read the nonessentialist essay about race fared considerably better on the creativity test. Their mean score was 32 percent higher than the mean score of those who read the essentialist essay.

"Essentialism appears to exert its negative effects on creativity not through what people think but how they think," concludes Tadmor. That's because "stereotyping and creative stagnation are rooted in a similar tendency to overrely on existing category attributes." Those quick-judgment skills that allowed us to survive on the savanna? Not always helpful in modern life.

A SOLUTION TO PREJUDICE?

The upshot of all this research is that in order to rid the world of prejudice, we can't simply snuff out overt racism. Nor can we fundamentally remake the human brain, with its rapid-fire associations and its groupish tendencies. Instead, the key lies in shifting people's behavior. And that just might be possible. In a massive study, Brian Nosek of the University of Virginia and his colleagues tested 17 different proposed ways of reducing people's unconscious bias on the IAT.

The single best intervention involved putting people into scenarios in which a black person became their ally while white people were depicted as the bad guys. In this intervention, participants read an evocative story told in second-person narrative in which a white man assaults the participant and a black man rescues him.

To rid the world of prejudice, we can't simply snuff out overt racism or remake the human brain.

Then they took the IAT—and showed 48 percent less bias than a control group. (Note: The groups in these various studies were mostly white; no participants were black.)

Another successful variation had nonblacks think about black role models or imagine themselves playing on a dodgeball team with black teammates against a team of white people (who proceed to cheat). In other words, it appears that our tribal instincts can actually be co-opted to decrease prejudice, if we are made to see those of other races as part of our team.

When it comes to weakening racial essentialism, Carmit Tadmor undertook another tack. Subjects were exposed to one of three 20-minute multimedia presentations: one exclusively about American culture, one exclusively about Chinese culture, and one comparing American and Chinese cultures, which presumably

led to a more nuanced perspective on their similarities and differences.

Tadmor found that white research subjects who had heard the multicultural presentation (but not the American-only or Chinese-only presentation) were less likely than members of the other study groups to endorse stereotypes about African Americans. That was true even though the subjects had learned about Chinese and American cultures, not African American culture specifically.

In a variation, the same 20-minute lecture also produced fewer discriminatory hiring decisions. After hearing one of the three kinds of lectures, white study subjects were shown a series of résumés for the position of sales manager at a company. Some applicants had white-sounding names, and some had black-sounding names.

White subjects who had heard the lecture exclusively about American culture (with topics like Disney, Coca-Cola, and the White House) picked a white candidate over an equally qualified black candidate 81 percent of the time. Subjects who had heard a lecture exclusively about Chinese culture picked a white candidate 86 percent of the time. But subjects who had heard the culture-comparing lecture selected the white candidate only 56 percent of the time.

These studies suggest that, at least for the short time span of a psychology experiment, there are cognitive ways to make people less prejudiced.

To be sure, it will take more than consciousness raising to erase the deep tracks of prejudice America has carved through the generations. But it's a start. Taking the IAT made me realize that we can't just draw some arbitrary line between prejudiced people and unprejudiced people and declare ourselves to be on the side of the angels. Biases have slipped into all our brains. And that means we all have a responsibility to recognize those biases—and to work to change them. R

Want to know where you stand when it comes to race? Take the Implicit Association Test (IAT) at understandingprejudice.org.

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WWWHAT'S THE DEAL?

"World Wide Web" has three syllables; "www" has nine. I have never understood an abbreviation that is longer than the phrase it is meant to shorten.

Source: *The Smartest Book in the World* by Greg Proops

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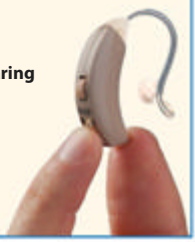

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My daughter approached a strange man on the beach. What happened next was a real lesson.

Give a Girl A Fish

BY VICKI GLEMBOCKI FROM QUEST FOR KINDNESS

"WE ARE GOOD MOMS," I said to my friend, as we sat on our very fancy beach chairs, under our very sturdily stabbed-into-the-sand beach umbrella and watched as our girls played in the surf.

In fact, I felt like an extraordinarily good mom on that summer morning—I'd woken up early, made a picnic lunch, herded my three- and five-year-old daughters into the car, driven to my friend's house, packed her and her three- and five-year-old daughters into the car, and driven the hour and a half to the New Jersey Shore, where we unfurled our towels on the beach by 10 a.m.

Out of nowhere, the girls took off running. About 50 yards from us, a man—maybe in his late 50s—was fishing with gigantic poles that looked like they could hook Jaws. The girls stood next to him and watched with their little mouths hanging open as he cast the lines. He smiled at them. They ran back to us—all except my three-year-old, Drew. Instead, she plopped her red-and-pink-flowered butt next to the white bucket where the man was probably planning to put the fish that he caught.

My brain immediately shot into Mama Bear mode: child molester. Pedophile. Felon.

"Drew! Come here! Play with your friends!" I yelled, very aware that my speeches about not talking to strangers weren't working. It seemed like all parents heard anymore was stories about abductions, Amber Alerts, two-year-olds found dead on train tracks. Good moms should be wary. Good moms should teach their daughters that the world is a dangerous place. So I felt relieved when Drew trotted over to me and grabbed a shovel. Then she looked me square in the eye: "I want to be with man."

ILLUSTRATION BY KEITH NEGLEY

SHE RAN BACK, sat down next to him, and started digging.

I watched them like there was a hidden camera in the lifeguard chair filming the man for *America's Most Wanted,* every few seconds darting my head toward my five-year-old to make sure she hadn't been swept out to sea, then back to Drew to make sure there was no contact. Just a man fishing. A little girl sitting.

"What do you think she's saying to him?" my friend asked. In the second I'd glanced away, Drew had started talking. Her mouth was moving at warp speed. She was probably telling the man where we lived and how her father was away on business and how her mother sometimes let her ride bikes with her sister in the driveway alone. He nodded. She kept talking. He nodded again, then laughed. She laughed.

A few seconds later, she ran back to us, waving something very shiny and slimy.

"Look, Mommy! A fish!"

"A what?" I recoiled.

"A toy fish!" It was, indeed, a toy fish—yellow and rubber and covered in gold sparkles. This must have been what he was using for bait. And he'd given it to Drew. The three other girls were impressed, and they didn't try to hide how insanely jealous they were. They all lunged for the fish. Drew looked at me for help, then at the man, then back at me.

"My friend gave me that fish!" she protested. The sand in front of the umbrella turned into a preschool cage match with a yellow rubber fish flipping through the air. Tears were fast approaching. I felt like I might cry myself. I tried to confiscate the fish, but that merely increased the volume of the tantrums-in-waiting.

Suddenly, there he was: the man, standing right next to us. He was holding three more rubber fish. He handed them to each of the girls. By their faces, you would have thought he was actually the really cute Jonas brother. "Thank you," they said, without prompting.

"Thank you," I said, realizing that yes, there is evil in the world ... but there also is good, and kindness in strangers, and lessons for mothers to learn that only three-year-olds could teach them. The man half-waved at us and walked back to his poles. R

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A PRICELESS PERK

Silence is not only golden, it is seldom misquoted.

BOB MONKHOUSE

Approved Use

Lopressor®(metoprolol tartrate) tablets can be used to treat:

- high blood pressure
- long-term chest pain
- acute heart attack

Important Safety Information

Do Not Use:

- To treat high blood pressure and chest pain if you also have low heart rhythm, slow heart hate, heart block, sudden heart attack, or obvious heart failure
- If you have an allergy to Lopressor or any of its ingredients
- If you have disorders caused by plaque build-up in your arteries such as PAD
- If you have skipped heart beats or an inability of the heart to pump blood to the rest of the body
- If you have consistent low blood pressure
- If you have moderate-to-severe cardiac failure

Risk of Severe Allergic Reaction: May require higher than usual doses of epinephrine therapy

The Most Common Side Effects: Low blood pressure, chest pain, tiredness, dizziness, shortness of breath or slow heart beat, wheezing, diarrhea, rash

You are encouraged to report negative side effects of prescription drugs to the FDA. Visit www.fda.gov/medwatch or 1-800-FDA-1088

Please see next page for the Brief Summary of the Product Information

BRAND NAME LOPRESSOR®
(metoprolol tartrate)
IS BACK!!

Individual's pictures are models and are used for illustrative purposes only.

Available in

50mg tablets* – and – 100mg tablets*

Call **1-866-9VALIDUS** for more information or help in obtaining Lopressor.

Validus PHARMACEUTICALS

*Tablets are not shown actual size.

Save up to $25 on each of your next 3 prescriptions

Lopressor®
(metoprolol tartrate) Tablets

Patient Instructions:

- Present this coupon, your insurance card, and your prescription for Lopressor® (metoprolol tartrate) Tablets to the pharmacist to receive up to $25 off your out-of-pocket expense.
- Keep this coupon, which can be used for your first prescription plus 2 refills. For additional savings, please download a new coupon from www.validuspharma.com.
- Please read IMPORTANT PRODUCT INFORMATION by visiting www.validuspharma.com. Please find program restrictions and conditions on the back of this coupon.

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Group: LCRDR474	**ID #: RDR497413088**

SUMMARY OF INFORMATION ABOUT LOPRESSOR® (metoprolol tartrate) Tablets

What is this drug used for:

- Lopressor® (metoprolol tartrate) tablets are used for the treatment of high blood pressure, either alone or in combination with other treatments for high blood pressure.
- Lopressor is also used in the long-term treatment of chest pain, and in the treatment of definite or suspected heart attack.

Do not use Lopressor: If you are using Lopressor for the treatment of high blood pressure and chest pain, do not use Lopressor if you also have low heart rhythm, slow heart rate, heart block, sudden heart attack, or obvious heart failure.

Do not use if you have:

- An allergy to Lopressor, any of its ingredients, or any allergies to other beta blockers
- Severe disorders caused by plaque build-up in your arteries, such as Peripheral Artery Disease
- Consistent low blood pressure
- Moderate-to-severe heart failure or congestive heart failure

If you are using Lopressor for the treatment of definite or suspected heart attack, do not use Lopressor if you also have slow heart beat or abnormal heart beat (such as skipped or irregular heart beat), or an inability of the heart to pump blood to the rest of the body

Warnings: Lopressor may have different effects depending on your condition being treated.

Heart Failure: Lopressor may cause heart failure and the inability of the heart to pump blood correctly. If this occurs, it may be necessary to lower the dose of Lopressor or discontinue therapy.

Reduced Blood Supply to Heart: Lopressor should not be abruptly discontinued if you have damaged blood vessels due to coronary artery disease; Lopressor dosage should be gradually reduced over a period of 1-2 weeks, and may be prescribed again if chest pains or heart failure develop.

Slow Heart Beat: Heart block and heart attack can occur with the use of Lopressor.

Use During Major Surgery: If Lopressor is administered frequently it should not be withdrawn prior to major surgery.

Increased Asthma and COPD: If you have asthma, COPD, or other breathing problems, Lopressor should only be used if you do not respond to other treatments.

Diabetes and Hypoglycemia: Beta blockers may mask abnormally rapid heart rate that may occur with diabetes or low blood sugar.

Adrenal Tumor: If you have a type of adrenal tumor known as a pheochromocytoma, Lopressor should be given in combination with an alpha blocker, and only after the alpha blocker has been initiated.

Overactive Thyroid: Lopressor may mask signs of an overactive thyroid.

Risk of Severe Allergic Reaction: If you have a history of severe allergic reactions, you may have a severe allergic reaction to Lopressor and may need higher-than-normal doses of epinephrine therapy.

Ask a healthcare provider before you use Lopressor if you are pregnant, nursing, or seeking to become pregnant.

Lopressor has been approved for adult use only.

Ask a health care provider before use if you are on any other prescription drugs. Lopressor may cause interactions with the following drugs:

- Catecholamine-depleting drugs
- Hydralazine
- Digitalis glycosides and beta blockers
- Alpha-adrenergic agents
- Calcium channel blockers
- Ergot alkaloid
- CYP2D6 inhibitors
- Dipyridamole

When using this product for high blood pressure or chest pain you may have:

Tiredness, dizziness and depression, diarrhea, rash, shortness of breath, or slow heart rate.

When using this product for treatment of definite or suspected heart attack you may have:

Heart failure, low blood pressure, slow heart rate, or slow or irregular heart beat.

The risk information provided here is not comprehensive. To learn more, talk about Lopressor with your healthcare provider or pharmacist.

How to get more information:

- Visit **http://validuspharma.com/lopressor/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/2014/06/Lopressor_PI.pdf** to obtain the FDA-approved package labeling
- **1-866-9VALIDUS**
- info@validuspharma.com

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LOP-050-15

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

Pharmacist: Please submit the claim to the Primary Third Party Payer first, then submit the balance due to **Therapy First Plus** as a Secondary Payer as a copay-only billing, using a valid Other Coverage Code indication. **Therapy First Plus** has been authorized to reimburse you up to $25 plus a handling fee for processing this coupon when accompanied by a prescription. Cannot be combined with any other offers. For questions regarding claims processing, please call the Help Desk at 1-800-422-5604. Offer good only in the USA. **Expires 05/31/2016.**

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That's Outrageous!

YOU KNOW YOU'RE A LOUSY CRIMINAL WHEN ...

... YOU FALL IN LOVE TOO EASILY

A Columbus, Ohio, woman had her purse stolen by three armed men in the parking lot outside her home. Two hours later, there was a knock on her door. It was one of the thieves. He had come by to ask her out. Source: *Columbus Dispatch*

... YOU HAVE YET TO CUT THE APRON STRINGS

After unsuccessfully robbing a convenience store, a young man ran across the street to another store, called his mother, and asked her to pick him up. Source: sun-sentinel.com

... YOUR FEELINGS ARE EASILY HURT

A Good Samaritan noticed an elderly man being robbed, so he jumped in and punched the thief. The thief was so upset, he called the police to complain. Source: utsandiego.com

... YOU TRY TOO HARD TO IMPRESS

This is how much a job applicant wanted to work at a McDonald's in Norfolk, Virginia: When the manager told him that he would need to apply online, the man showed him a gun tucked into his waistband. Hard to believe, but the manager found a paper application for him. As the gun toter filled it out, officers arrived and ordered one criminal to go.

Source: wvec.com

... YOU'RE IMPROPERLY DRESSED

A man broke out of a Kentucky prison in January but quickly turned himself back in because he was cold.

Source: Associated Press

... YOU FORGET TO TYPE OUT YOUR HEIST NOTE

A bank robber in Hillsboro, Oregon, handed a bank teller a note that read, "Need $300 or I'll kill you. I'm serious." At least, that's what it was intended to say—but the teller couldn't read the bank robber's handwriting. So the robber stepped aside to rewrite the note on a bank slip, giving the teller time to activate the silent alarm. Source: kptv.com

ILLUSTRATION BY NISHANT CHOKSI

DRAMA IN REAL LIFE

Alex Vega

Víctor Zamora

Carlos Barrios

José Henríquez

Daniel Herrera

Esteban Rojas

Edison Peña

Almost half a mile underground for 69 grueling days, 33 miners hang on to hope. The incredible true story of their ordeal ...

BURIED ALIVE!

José Ojeda

Juan Carlos Aguilar

BY HÉCTOR TOBAR FROM THE BOOK *DEEP DOWN DARK*

Darío Segovia

Mario Sepúlveda

Omar Reygadas

Osman Araya

Carlos Bugueño

Carlos Mamani

Claudio Acuña

Claudio Yáñez

Richard Villarroel

Florencio Ávalos

Franklin Lobos

Yonni Barrios

Juan Illanes

Renán Ávalos

Luis Urzúa

Mario Gómez

Pablo Rojas

Pedro Cortez

Raúl Bustos

Jimmy Sánchez

Víctor Segovia

Ariel Ticona

Jorge Galleguillos

Samuel Ávalos

THE RAMP, the main tunnel in the San José Mine in Chile's Atacama Desert, begins about a mile above sea level near the top of a round, rocky mountain. From the 16-by-16-foot entrance, the Ramp corkscrews into the mountain through a series of gradually narrowing switchbacks. Men driving dump trucks, front loaders, and pickup trucks use the winding path to gather minerals collected by the workers who mine small passageways for ore-bearing rock.

On the morning of August 5, 2010, some men are working almost 2,500 feet below the surface, loading freshly blasted ore into a dump truck. Another group works about a hundred feet above them, fortifying a passageway, while still others are resting in the Refuge, a room carved out of the rock some 2,300 feet down. The Refuge, with its cinder block walls and heavy metal door, was supposed to be a shelter in the event of an emergency, but it also serves as a break room; fresh air is pumped in from the surface to offer respite from the heat.

A little after 1:00 p.m., Franklin Lobos is driving a pickup truck down to the Refuge, where a group of miners waits for a ride up to the surface for lunch. Another miner, Jorge Galleguillos, is riding with Lobos when, at about 2,000 feet below the surface, he suddenly says, "Did you see that? A butterfly."

"What? A butterfly? No, it wasn't," Lobos answers. "It was a white rock."

"It was a butterfly," Galleguillos insists.

Lobos can't believe a butterfly would flutter this far down in the dark. But he doesn't argue. Suddenly, the two men hear a massive explosion. The passageway fills with dust as the Ramp collapses behind them, hitting the men as a roar of sound, as if a massive skyscraper is crashing.

Below them, the blast wave throws open the door to the Refuge, and the miners waiting on the Ramp for the lunch truck run into the room. Soon about two dozen men are huddled inside as the mountain caves in on itself. After a few minutes, as the noise dies down, the men decide to run for safety, heading out to the Ramp to try to scramble to the surface.

Luis Urzúa, the shift manager, and Mario Sepúlveda, who is operating a front loader, are near the Refuge when they hear a crash and feel the pressure wave that passes through the tunnel. Florencio Ávalos, Urzúa's assistant, pulls up in a pickup truck and tells them that the mine is collapsing.

The three men quickly drive to the Refuge to pick up anyone there on lunch break, but the room is empty. Then they head downhill because

PREVIOUS SPREAD: AFP/GETTY IMAGES

they know there are workers deeper in the mine. It's Urzúa's responsibility to get every man out.

About 150 feet below the Refuge, Mario Gómez and Omar Reygadas, two mining veterans, are loading gold-and-copper-laden rock into the back of a truck. They both feel a burst of pressure, but Reygadas just thinks the shift supervisor has ordered some routine blasting. When their truck is loaded, Gómez begins to drive toward the surface but gets only a few hundred feet before hitting a thick cloud of dust. Soon he can see only a few feet in front of his vehicle. He points his steering wheel straight, driving blindly. Then Urzúa appears in front of him, gesturing for them to stop.

Gómez and Reygadas jump into the pickup, and Ávalos manages to drive back up to the Refuge. The men trying to escape during a lull in the explosions have now retreated to the Refuge. When they see the truck, they rush toward it, squeezing into the cab and jumping into the back. "Go! Go! Let's get out of here!" At the wheel, Ávalos heads toward the surface.

THE SHIFT LEADER FEELS HIS HOPE FADE, LEAVING BEHIND A COLD, CLEAR VISION OF THE FUTURE.

The truck sags under the weight of the men. When the dust once again becomes too thick to see through, Mario Sepúlveda gets out and walks ahead with his flashlight, guiding Ávalos forward. They meet up with several mechanics who have been working higher up in the mine, and they, too, climb aboard. Advancing farther into the dust, they meet the truck coming down with Franklin Lobos and Jorge Galleguillos.

Sepúlveda shines his light on the two men and sees the blood-drained look of mortal fear. Lobos and Galleguillos recount the collapse they just escaped. Then Urzúa orders them to turn around, and they all head higher up the spiral, more debris appearing on the roadway of the Ramp, as if they are getting closer to the scene of a battle.

Eventually rocks block their way, and the men get out and walk. Adrenaline and a vision of the midday sun at the top of the Ramp urge them up the arduous climb. They follow the lights of their headlamps and flashlights until the beams strike the gray surface of a stone slab. After the dust settles, the full size of the obstacle becomes apparent. The Ramp is blocked, from top to bottom and all the way across, by a flat, smooth sheet of the mountain, as tall as a 45-story building and weighing 700,000 tons.

No Way Out

AT FIVE FEET THREE INCHES TALL, Alex Vega is the smallest of the miners. He slithers on his stomach and stares into a tiny opening beneath the immense gray stone. Vega tells the men he thinks he can squeeze through.

"No," Urzúa says. He thinks it's a crazy thing to do.

But Vega insists, and finally Urzúa tells him, "Just be careful."

Vega squeezes his small frame into a crevice of jagged rock. With his lamp in hand, he crawls about ten feet into the crack, until he can advance no farther.

"There's no way through," he announces after he crawls out.

For some of the older miners, the sight of the stone and Vega's words bring an overwhelming sense of finality. Some have been trapped in mines before, by rock falls that a bulldozer could clear in a couple of hours. But this gray wall is different.

Galleguillos thinks he'll never see his new grandson, and he feels tears running down his cheeks. Gómez, who lost two fingers in a previous accident, realizes that he's pushed his luck too far—first his fingers, now his life.

The trapped miners turn their backs on the curtain of stone and split into two groups. Eight men search the mine's matrix of tunnels for a passageway to the surface. The main purpose of these shafts is to allow air, water, and electricity to flow into the mine. They are supposed to be fitted with ladders to provide an escape route, but the San José Mine is a shoestring operation. The owners have cut costs by ignoring some of the safety measures, meaning only a few of the chimneys have ladders.

The rest of the group heads back to the Refuge. As the two groups split up, Florencio Ávalos, the second in command, quietly tells one of the older miners, "Take care of the provisions. Don't let the miners eat them yet, because we may be trapped for days." He speaks softly because he doesn't want to panic the men.

At the Refuge, the miners note that the connections to the surface—the electricity, the intercom system, the flow of water and compressed air—have been cut. The first few hours pass slowly, punctuated by rumbling stomachs and the continuing thunder of rocks falling somewhere in the dark spaces beyond the weak, warm light of their headlamps.

Meanwhile, the eight-man escape expedition drives a jumbo lifter to the chimney, opening a hole in the ceiling. Raising his head into the hole,

Sepúlveda is surprised to see a ladder, built from pieces of rebar drilled into the rock. He begins to climb, with Raúl Bustos behind him. The dust makes it hard to breathe, and the walls are slippery with humidity. Halfway up, one of the rebar rungs breaks off, and the metal strikes Sepúlveda in the front teeth, sending a rush of blood into his mouth. He shakes his head in pain but keeps going.

Sepúlveda reaches the top of the chimney and sweeps the beam of his flashlight across the blackness. He stands up, and when Bustos reaches the top, they walk up the Ramp, hoping that after the next curve in the spiral, the route to the top will be open. Instead their light beams strike the shiny, smooth wall blocking their way. Sepúlveda feels the hope draining from his body, leaving him with a cold, clear vision of what is happening to them.

The two men turn and walk downhill, past the chimney they just scaled, and go around another curve to find the same gray wall blocking their path again. When they look for the next chimney opening, the one that might lead them up to a higher level, their flashlights reveal that in this one, there is no ladder at all.

"This way isn't going to work," Sepúlveda says. "What are we going to tell *los niños*?"

"Let's tell them the truth," Bustos says.

The Search for Hope

AT THE BOTTOM OF THE CHIMNEY, Sepúlveda and Bustos deliver the news to the small group of men. The Ramp is blocked on other levels too. There is no way out.

The men look at Urzúa, the shift supervisor, but he says nothing. He looks drained and defeated. He knows that men are sometimes buried alive in mines and eventually die of starvation. And he knows that after six or seven days, if the rescuers don't find you, they usually give up. He'd like to say something to give his men hope, but he refuses to lie to them. So he says nothing. Later, at the Refuge, Urzúa announces to the men that he is no longer their boss. They're all stuck together, he says, and they should make decisions together.

Sepúlveda has a different attitude. His life has been one struggle after another—his mother died delivering him, and he grew up one of ten children of a hard-drinking father. Fighting to stay alive is when he feels most like himself. And so, despite his lack of standing in the mining hierarchy,

Sepúlveda tries to take control of his own fate and that of the men around him with optimism and a focus on survival. When Urzúa and Sepúlveda and the men from the failed escape attempt arrive at the Refuge, they find a scene of disarray. Some of the hungry men have broken into the food supplies and grabbed packages of cookies and cartons of milk. They're sitting in the darkness, crumpling plastic wrappers and chewing cookies.

"What are you doing?" Sepúlveda says with his raspy voice. "Don't you realize we might be down here for days? Or weeks?"

Then he and Bustos reveal the truth about what they learned higher up in the mine. They are trapped. There will be no easy escape or rescue.

A BITE OF CANNED FISH AND TWO COOKIES MUST HOLD EACH MAN UNTIL THE NEXT DAY.

Sepúlveda leads a tally of what is inside the emergency cabinet—cans of peaches, peas, and tuna, along with 24 liters of condensed milk and 93 packages of cookies. But the men will not die of dehydration. There are several thousand liters of water in nearby tanks, to keep the engines cool. The water is tainted with small amounts of oil, but it is still drinkable.

A few men go back up to the caverns to try to alert people on the surface to the presence of men below—honking the horn of a front loader, banging the arm of the machine against the wall. They hear nothing in return.

Around 10 p.m., the men in the Refuge begin looking for a place to lie down. Omar Reygadas, a widower, thinks about his children and grandchildren. He begins to cry, so he steps out of the Refuge. He finds a front loader on the Ramp and sits inside, remembering the moment of collapse. Tons of rock have fallen, yet no one is hurt. He thinks it carries a hint of the divine.

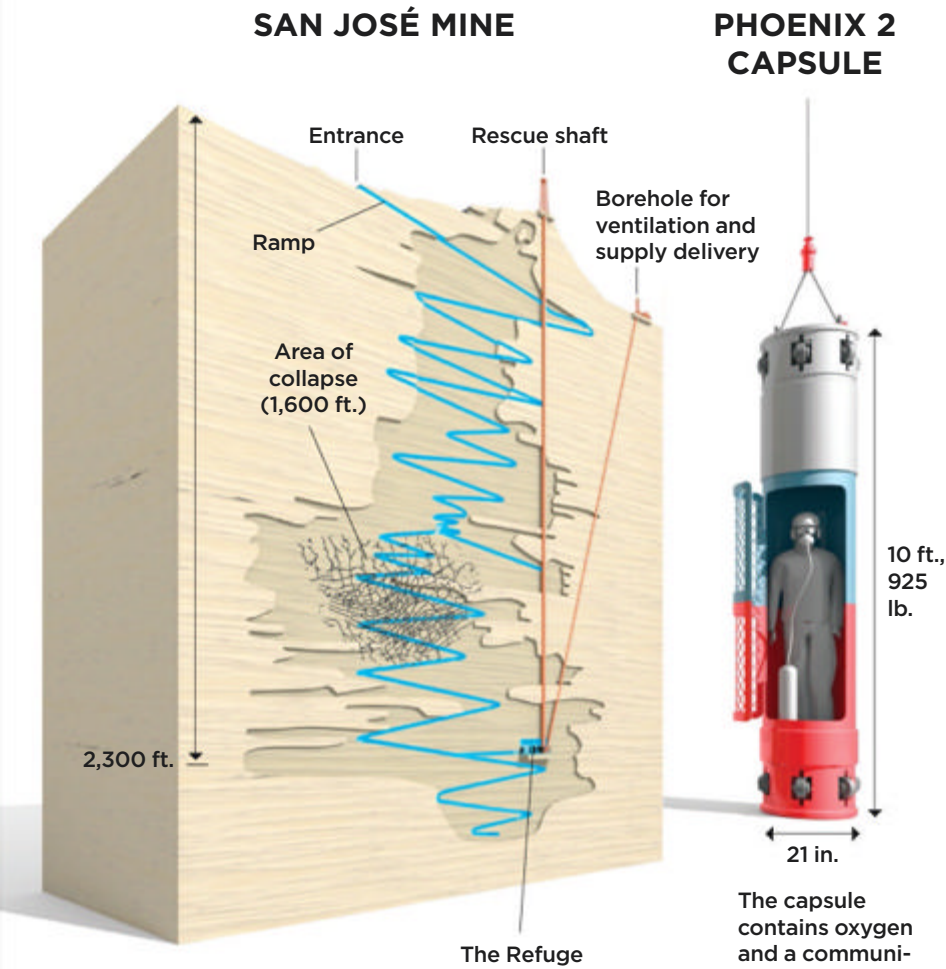
Meanwhile, Urzúa has surrendered his authority, but he has not given up completely. Some of the men are restless and go back to the base of the chimney that Sepúlveda and Bustos climbed. They set fire to an oil-soaked air filter and a small tire, hoping the smoke will drift up and reach the surface, sending a signal that there are living men below.

They use a front loader to try to move the rocks in some of the galleries. Maybe if they clear a space, there will be an opening that leads upward. But every time they lift out rocks, more fall from the top of the pile.

At noon on the second day, all 33 men gather as Sepúlveda divides and distributes their daily "meal"—one teaspoon of canned fish mixed with water, and two cookies for each man. That single meal at noon, containing fewer than 300 calories, has to hold them until the next day.

ANATOMY OF A RESCUE

Once a plan was in place, it took a 46-ton drill more than a month to complete the nearly half-mile-deep rescue shaft. On October 12, 2010, Florencio Ávalos was the first miner to reach the surface in the capsule—painted white, blue, and red, the colors of the Chilean flag.



INFOGRAPHIC BY BRYAN CHRISTIE DESIGN

Surviving Underground

ON THE DAY the miners are trapped, men on the surface hear the explosions and see the dust spewing out from the mine entrance. One rescue team descends in a pickup truck until, about 1,500 feet below the surface, the men come to the flat gray mass of mountain blocking the Ramp. Another team brings ropes and pulleys to descend into the chimneys, but at each level, they find the same obstruction.

Calls go out to the local fire department, the National Geology and Mining Service, and the disaster office of Chile's Ministry of the Interior. The mining company puts off contacting the families of the men, but wives and girlfriends and parents and siblings soon find out and congregate at the mine. Several times during the first few days, the mountain rumbles as if it is going to explode again.

BY NOW, ALL OF CHILE IS WATCHING. ITS PRESIDENT MAKES A VISIT TO THE MINE.

Underground, the miners huddle inside the relative safety of the Refuge, making the heat and humidity even worse. The room fills with the smell of their sweating, unbathed bodies. They have no idea how long they'll be down there, so they must conserve the water. It is too precious to use for bathing.

To keep from feeling hopeless, they talk and joke and tell stories. One miner, Víctor Segovia, starts a diary. "There is a great sense of powerlessness," he notes. "We don't know if they're trying to rescue us, because we don't hear any machines working."

Another miner, José Henríquez is a devout Evangelical, and he leads the men in prayer. "We aren't the best men, but Lord, have pity on us," he says. They kneel and ask God to guide their rescuers to the tiny room where they are waiting.

Henríquez also has a cell phone. There is no service, but the men can use the phone to record events. Mario Sepúlveda narrates a short video of the men making a meal. "Tuna with peas!" he announces. "Eight liters of water, one can of tuna, some peas. So we can survive this situation."

After the meal, a few of the men get excited because they say they can hear the sound of distant drilling. "It's a lie," someone replies. "You can't hear anything."

The discussion goes back and forth, until even those who say they felt

that faint and possibly imaginary vibration concede that it has stopped, or has disappeared, or may have never existed.

Segovia writes in his diary that the men feel the monster of "insanity" welling up inside them. Four days underground now. He draws stick figures of the men lying on the ground; he lists the names of his five daughters and of his mother and father and himself and then circles a heart around them. "Don't cry for me," he writes.

At 7:30 p.m. on August 8, some 78 hours after being trapped, Segovia records the sound of something spinning, grinding, and hammering against the rock. A drill.

"Do you hear that?" Sepúlveda shouts. "What a beautiful noise!"

"Those drills can make 100 meters a day," says one of the miners.

Everyone does the math. It will be another five or six days, if nothing goes wrong.

Desperate Drilling

THE FIRST DRILL PLATFORM ARRIVES at the San José Mine on Sunday, August 8, on a vehicle as long as a gasoline tanker. The rescuers consult the blueprints for the mine and begin drilling for the Refuge. The grinding and pounding spit a cloud of dust from a chimney pipe and send a flow of wastewater over the ground. Nearby, other teams begin to drill as well. Eventually nine drills will be working—rescuers are firing nine bullets at the target, hoping one will hit. A borehole to the Refuge would allow rescuers to deliver food and other supplies to the trapped miners.

By this time, all of Chile is watching. The country's president puts his minister of mining in charge of the rescue effort, and the president himself makes a visit to the mine. The drilling proceeds for a fourth, fifth, and sixth day. Shrines arise on the mountain, built by family members, with candles affixed to the rocks. Prayer is their only defense against the growing sense of hopelessness and finality.

The night of August 15, the miners' 11th day underground, a drill hits an open space 1,653 feet below the surface but still about 650 feet above the Refuge. All the drills are halted as rescuers put their ears to a steel pipe they've lowered into the shaft. They hear a rhythmic noise, a tapping. A camera is sent down the borehole. There is nothing. Just a space of empty rock. The tapping sound? The power of suggestion. They want someone to be down there, and so they hear things that aren't there.

The days pass, and pessimism grows. Some people say the miners are all dead. Others report strange occurrences—claiming to see spirits of the 33 men wandering around the neighborhood.

In the Refuge, some of the men play checkers with a set crafted from pieces of cardboard. They all tell stories; they talk about food. They conclude that if they die, their families might get between $80,000 and $120,000, or nearly a decade's worth of wages for an average Chilean worker.

The drilling grinds on and then stops, often for hours at a time, leaving a cruel silence. Some men decide they can't just sit and wait for the drills to reach them. The rescuers will eventually give up without a sign of life from below, the miners reason. So they renew their efforts to send a message to the top. They collect some dynamite and some fuses and walk up as high as they can. They wait for the drilling to stop. Then they light the fuse. The dynamite explodes—but they are 2,300 feet underground. How could anyone on the surface hear?

THE DRILL OPERATOR FEELS THE PULSE IN THE STEEL AND HEARS A FRANTIC TAPPING. "IT'S THEM!" HE YELLS.

On August 16, the 12th day underground, Segovia notes in his diary the signs that they are losing hope: "Hardly anyone talks anymore. The skin now hugs the bones of our faces, and our ribs all show, and when we walk, our legs tremble."

Their metabolisms are slowing down. Even the most energetic among them are sleeping longer than normal, and there is a haze drifting over their thoughts. Several men experience a strange side effect of prolonged hunger: Their dreams and nightmares are unusually long and vivid.

On the 16th day, the men share their last peach. Several men start writing farewell letters, in the hopes that a rescuer might one day find their final message. They are starting to feel weak. For some, it seems as if the next time they fall asleep, they might not wake up. Some need help to stand up and walk down the Ramp to go to the bathroom. The older miners, especially, are beginning to resign themselves to their fate. Only Omar Reygadas keeps insisting, "They're coming for us."

On the 17th day underground, the men hear another drill getting closer, the *rat-a-tat-tat* sound getting louder, holding the promise of either liberation or another disappointment. Segovia can't allow himself to believe the drill will break through. Instead, he asks Sepúlveda, "What do you think dying is like?"

Sepúlveda says it's like falling asleep. Peaceful. You close your eyes; you rest. All your worries are over.

A Breakthrough

AT 6 A.M. ON AUGUST 22, several men on the drill platform are asleep. But one driller notices something odd—the steel tube is starting to stutter. Suddenly the dust coming out of the chimney stops, and the pressure gauge drops to zero. He stops the drill.

Far below, there is a small explosion just up the tunnel from the Refuge. The grinding stops, and there is a whistling of escaped air. Two miners jump up and run toward the noise. They see a length of pipe protruding from the rock. A drill bit lowers and rises and lowers again.

One miner begins pounding with a wrench on the pipe protruding from the ceiling. He strikes it against the pipe with joy and desperation. We're here! We're here!

Soon all 33 miners gather around the pipe and the drill bit, embracing and weeping. José Henríquez, who, after 17 days underground, has been transformed into a shirtless and starving prophet, looks at the drill bit and pronounces to everyone:

"*Dios existe*," he says. God exists.

Up above, the drill operator feels the pulse in the steel and puts his ear to the shaft. He hears a frantic tapping. "It's them!" he calls out.

The other drills on the mountain stop. Calls go out to Chilean officials. The drill team raises up the bit and removes the steel tubing from the shaft. The miners have painted the bottom of the tube. A note announces: "We are well in the Refuge. The 33."

A camera and a microphone are lowered into the borehole, and soon the sound of the miners cheering and yelling comes over the speakerphone on the surface. The next tube lowered down contains small bottles of a glucose mixture. A note warns the miners not to drink it too quickly, but of course the men swallow it in one gulp, and several feel their stomachs cramp up painfully.

More glucose is sent down, along with medicines and eventually real food. Then the miners receive the first letters from their families.

On August 30, twenty-five days after the miners were trapped, the rescue team begins drilling a rescue hole. The plan is to excavate a 15-inch pilot hole, then widen it to 28 inches—room enough for a small capsule to bring the miners up one at a time. Because of the group's location and the danger of another collapse in the 100-year-old mine, the rescue could take months. "God willing," Chilean president Sebastián Piñera tells the men, "we'll have you out before Christmas."

Former pro soccer player Franklin Lobos, in the blue helmet, was the 27th miner to emerge.

JUAN MABROMATA/AFP/GETTY IMAGES

The Nightmare Ends

SIXTY-NINE DAYS after the miners were buried, on the night of October 12, rescuer Manuel González descends in a capsule to coordinate the evacuation. Florencio Ávalos is the first to go up. "We'll see each other up on top," he tells the other miners as he enters the cage. Ávalos rises through the shaft. It takes 30 minutes to get to the surface.

By the end of the next day, all 33 buried miners are brought to the surface. Rescuer González is the last man out. None of the men sustains serious injury, though most of them suffer lingering psychological and emotional issues—nightmares, depression, and alcohol abuse.

Today, most of those problems have begun to heal. The men received pensions from the Chilean government, enough that the older men could retire. Most of the younger miners are back to work, though, several in aboveground jobs with the national mining company; one is a truck driver, and another has a fruit business.

None of the miners got rich from their adventure or the publicity surrounding it. But they are all still alive. R

DEEP DOWN DARK: THE UNTOLD STORIES OF 33 MEN BURIED IN A CHILEAN MINE, AND THE MIRACLE THAT SET THEM FREE BY HÉCTOR TOBAR, COPYRIGHT © 2014 BY HÉCTOR TOBAR, IS PUBLISHED BY FARRAR, STRAUS AND GIROUX, LLC, US.MACMILLAN.COM/FSG.

Laugh Lines

SUMMER VACATIONS

We use a really strong sunblock when we go to the beach with the kids. It's SPF 80: You squeeze the tube, and a sweater comes out.

LEW SCHNEIDER

"I can't wait until your vacation is over." —Everyone following you on Instagram

@KRISTENCARNEY

I walked up to a tourist information booth and asked them to tell me about a couple of people who were here last year.

STEVEN WRIGHT

The Coney Island Cyclone is one of the oldest roller coasters in the world ... built in 1927. Yeah. They should change the name to "1927!" because that fact is *way* scarier than cyclones.

KUMAIL NANJIANI

Some people like to travel by train because it combines the slowness of a car with the cramped public exposure of an airplane.

DENNIS MILLER

I think my pilot was a little inexperienced. We were sitting on the runway, and he said, "OK, folks, we're gonna be taking off in a just few—*whoa!* Here we go."

KEVIN NEALON

GETTY IMAGES

Hearing For The First Time

... at Age 39

A woman—born deaf—takes the gamble of her life and escapes a world of silence

BY JO MILNE
FROM THE BOOK
BREAKING THE SILENCE

PHOTOGRAPHS BY NADAV KANDER

MY GUIDE DOG, Matt, shuffles at my feet. We're on a crowded train, and I'm trying to build a mental picture of the other riders.

I smell a strong, sweet perfume. My fellow passengers probably haven't noticed it—they'll be busy chatting on their cell phones or reading the paper. But to me, it's a clue. Does the lovely scent belong to a girl on her way to meet her boyfriend? Or perhaps she has a first date? I can smell coffee too. I tell myself to be careful in case there's a hot drink nearby.

This is my life as a deaf-blind woman: trapped in a world that is getting darker by the day, a silent world interrupted only by the blurry low-level white noise my hearing aids give me.

But in a month, I'll have cochlear implants. The surgeons tell me that at the age of 39, I might be able to hear for the first time the voices of those I love: my family, my friends, and the colleagues I work alongside of as a mentoring coordinator. It's an incredible prospect, but it comes with serious risks. If the auditory nerve is damaged, I'll be stripped of even the fuzzy noise I've come to rely on, a sound that's a bit like what you hear when you're underwater.

I'm overwhelmed by fear. My mother is worried too. "You're OK as you are, Joanne," she says. "What if it goes wrong?"

But what if it doesn't? What if there's a chance that I'll take out my hearing aids and never put them back in again?

I know that one day soon, I will lose what remains of my eyesight—I have retinitis pigmentosa, another symptom of Usher syndrome, the rare and cruel genetic condition that robbed me of my hearing at birth. Since I began going blind, in my late 20s, I have had no peripheral vision—just a narrow tunnel of sight in front of my face that lets me lip-read. But is there really a chance that the doctors are going to give me back my ears in exchange?

"What if it goes wrong?" says Mom. But what if it doesn't?

MY EYELIDS FEEL as if someone has attached lead weights to them. Slowly, with a huge effort, I blink them open. A crack in the ceiling of the hospital ward comes into focus. Then a face appears in my tunnel vision. It's Mom.

"Did they do the operation?" I croak. "Is it over?" Mom laughs.

TWO DAYS AFTER the operation, I'm home in Gateshead, England. The specialists think it has gone well, but I have to wait a month before the implants can be switched on. Only

then will we know whether it has been a success.

Suddenly, I have become helpless. I can't wear my hearing aids anymore, and without them, the white noise that guided me through each day has disappeared. The total and utter silence is a depressing companion.

What scares me most is the thought of staying like this forever.

A MONTH LATER, I'm back at the hospital. Mom and I are sitting in the waiting room. A large-screen TV posts each patient's name and the waiting time.

Joanne Milne, ten minutes.

Six minutes: That nagging fear just won't go away—what if the operation hasn't worked?

Five minutes: I think of other things. The fear in Mom's face as she rushed out of the house when I was hit by a car as a little girl because I couldn't hear it coming. The time I wriggled out of my stroller while Mom was looking in a store window. The frantic two hours she spent searching for me in the crowds, knowing there was no point in calling my name. The fight she had to get me into the same mainstream school as my sisters. The bullies who spat on my back on the school bus, thinking it was hilarious that I couldn't hear them.

Three minutes: I look up at the screen and swallow hard.

One minute: I'm looking down at the floor when I see a pair of black shoes appear beside me. I look up, see a friendly face appear in my tunnel, and feel the vibrations of Mom getting up next to me.

I TAKE A SEAT opposite the audiologist, Louise, in her office. Before she switches on the implants, she needs to align 22 electrodes in each ear with a computer. It's a drawn-out process as she attaches wires from my new hearing aids to her computer. When she puts them behind my ears for the first time, they feel cold and hard.

After the same laborious process is repeated over and over for each electrode, Louise puts down her pen and smiles at me.

"Caaaaan … yooooou … heeeear … meeeeeeeee?"

The first words I've ever heard.

Every letter and syllable bounces off the walls, the ceiling, the doors, ringing out around the room, in my ears, and rattling round my brain as it desperately tries to filter every new sound that has pirouetted out of Louise's mouth and hit my ears, exploding like a firework.

Is this what sound is like? This isn't a white noise or a gentle hum. This is what it feels like not to be deaf. This is hearing.

"I'll go through the days of the week," Louise tells me slowly.

She sounds how I've imagined a robot might. Her voice is high, squeaky, and electronic: "Monday … Tuesday … Wednesday …"

HAIR AND MAKEUP: CHARLOTTE CAVE FOR ONE REPRESENTS

The emotions come fizzing out of my body like a shaken can of soda. Tears spill into my lap as I try to take it all in.

"Thursday ... Friday ... Saturday ... Sunday ..."

Words I've known my entire life but ones I'm hearing for the first time. So ordinary, and yet to me they are the most beautiful words imaginable.

Mom is standing to my right, filming this moment. I try to speak, and I have this strange sensation from within. A voice in my head. My own voice.

"It sounds very high," I say.

"It will sound high-pitched at first," says Louise. "Your brain will readjust it, so it won't always sound that way."

I put my head into my lap and sob.

"Smile," says Mom, as she stands with the video camera. She has been my mouthpiece, my ears, my eyes, my entire life, and I've never even heard how she sounds until now. My brain tries to compute the difference between her and Louise and instantly spots it: Mom's Northern English accent. So that's how we sound.

The operation has worked. I can hear. If you could bottle joy at its happiest, that's how I'm feeling. In all those years in my silent world, words were lost on me, strangers that I could only hope to befriend. And yes, there's an obvious question: How do I know what these spoken words mean, never having heard them before? All those years of lip-reading had taught my brain the shape and feel of spoken words even before I'd heard them. And now, suddenly, sound and meaning are coming together.

I leave Louise's office a hearing woman. As we walk away, I hear the tap of footsteps on the floor. Then there's another sound.

"What's that noise?" I ask Mom.

"It's a phone ringing," she says, and as I look up, my tunnel vision reveals the receptionist picking up the receiver.

"What's that noise?" I ask again, as a *clink clink* sound passes by.

"It's a lunch trolley."

The tiny little signs that everyone takes for granted are coloring my world, bringing it to life like I've never experienced before.

AS WE LEAVE the hospital and step out into the March day, the wind whips around the ground, picking up leaves and swirling them round and round. And I realize then that the wind makes a noise, a rushing whoosh of a noise.

We stop at a restaurant, and I'm astonished by just how noisy the world is: the clattering of the kitchen, knives and forks tapping on plates, the hum of conversations across the room. And then I notice something else: the sound of my own cutlery scraping against my plate.

"I'm a very noisy eater," I laugh to Mom.

Everything is wondrous to me: the fact that I answer the waitress when she asks if I want Parmesan for my pasta, even though I'm looking away; the noise my glass makes when I put it down too hard on the table; the ice that clanks around between the lemon slices in my drink.

I thought drinks were silent. I thought glasses didn't make a noise. I thought you could communicate with people only when you were looking at them. These are all secrets that the hearing world is now letting me in on.

By the time we get back to our hotel room, my brain is exhausted from the effort of hearing. As Mom hangs her coat up in the wardrobe, I ask her for the first time in my life to be quiet. "Oooh, sorry!" she says. And we collapse into fits of giggles. R

BREAKING THE SILENCE: MY STORY AS I LEARNED TO HEAR FOR THE FIRST TIME, BY JO MILNE AND ANNA WHARTON, COPYRIGHT © 2015 BY JO MILNE, IS PUBLISHED BY CORONET BOOKS, CORONETBOOKS.COM.

COST OF LIVING

What do you think the employee discount is at the dollar store? Do you think it's "just take it"?

PETE HOLMES, comedian

When I'm at the Olive Garden, I'm family. Which means that I borrowed $10,000 from the waiter and never paid him back.

NICK KROLL, comedian

Source: comedycentralstandup.tumblr.com

WHO ? KNEW

13 Things Your Dog Knows About You

BY MICHELLE CROUCH

1 You're a generous person—or not. I make judgments about you based on your actions. University of Milan researchers had dogs watch some people sharing food with a beggar and other people telling the beggar to leave. Later, when the individuals beckoned the dogs at the same time, the pups overwhelmingly trotted over to the generous people.

2 When you have negative feelings about a person, I can hear your breathing pattern change, observe your body stiffen slightly, and even smell the subtle pheromones your body emits. So if your in-laws suspect that I don't like them, it may simply be because, um, you don't really like them.

3 I know where you've been. You humans are like sponges. You pick up volatile organic compounds from everything you walk by or touch. If you just visited, say, the supermarket, I will smell the butcher and fish counters, the food you

ILLUSTRATION BY SERGE BLOCH

bought, and maybe even the people you stood next to at checkout. I can smell something 100 million times more subtle than the faintest smell you can pick up.

4 You may have cancer. Some of us are being taught to detect different types of cancer by smelling certain chemicals that cancer cells can emit. In some studies, we were 88 percent accurate in detecting breast cancer and 99 percent accurate in detecting lung cancer.

5 You're coming home. We've learned your schedule, and we know roughly when to expect you back at the house each day. But even if you get home at an odd hour, I can pick out the sound of your particular car coming down the street, and I am always listening for it.

6 You've had a fight with your spouse. Even if you don't yell in front of me, I may notice your clipped tone of voice, the fact that neither of you is speaking, the stiffness of your posture, or the agitated way you're walking or opening drawers. Some of us get sick to our stomachs when our owners are bickering.

7 When you need protection. Do I sleep cuddled up next to your bed instead of in my usual spot ➳

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when your spouse is out of town? Do I stay closer to your leg than normal when we walk through a dark area? I can smell the adrenaline your body releases when you're scared, and I'm also more vigilant anytime someone in the household is missing.

8 You're going on a trip. I hate it when you leave, so I've learned to pick up on all the clues when a departure is imminent—suitcases pulled from the closet or the way you always spread clothes out on your bed. Some of us start to shake and pant because our anxiety spikes. Feel bad? One study found playing classical music for us when we're alone can help us calm down.

9 You're a sucker for our puppy dog eyes. Researchers have found that your body releases the hormone oxytocin (the same chemical that's released when you look at your baby) when we make eye contact with you. So there's a reason we gaze at you lovingly when we want something: It works.

10 What your intentions are. I can pick up nearly imperceptible signals in your body language—a darting of your eyes or the way you grab the leash—that tell me what you're planning. In one study, dogs were easily able to identify the location of hidden food simply by following a human gaze.

11 You're not feeling well. We can be trained to sniff out everything from a drop in your blood sugar to a migraine. A growing number of epileptic patients are getting dogs that alert them to a seizure before it happens. In one Hawaiian hospital, dogs sniffed out urinary tract infections in paralyzed patients who couldn't report symptoms.

12 Your baby is weak. I know your little one is a member of my pack, and I also know she's the most vulnerable. Because I have a strong instinct to guard my family members, I can be extremely protective. That's why I bark aggressively when someone approaches the stroller and why you should be vigilant if someone is playing with your child when I'm around. (If I mistakenly think she is getting hurt, I may attack.)

13 You're bummed out. I am a master at reading your body language and emotional state. One study found that I can tell if someone's sad simply by reading facial expressions (even if I'm looking at a photo of just half a face!). I'm also more likely to approach someone who is crying than someone humming or talking, an indication of empathy.

Sources: Dog trainer Sarah Wilson, author of *My Smart Puppy*; Patty Khuly, VMD, a veterinarian in Miami, Florida; dog trainer Dina Zaphiris, founder of the InSitu Foundation; Laurie Santos, PhD, director of the Canine Cognition Center at Yale University; Stanley Coren, PhD, a psychologist and the author of *Do Dogs Dream?*

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LOOK
TWICE ...

... What do you see? No, that's not lava or oil spilling into the sea, though diving in would still be a scorching mistake. At 370 feet wide, Yellowstone's Grand Prismatic Spring is the largest hot spring in America, piping nearly 200-degree water out of the earth at the clear blue center and cooling it to about 131˚F in those reddish-brown rivulets. The cooler the water, the greater the variety of light-reflecting bacteria that live there, creating a stunning rainbow effect explorer Ferdinand Hayden called "a privilege and a blessing" to behold.

YANN ARTHUS-BERTRAND/AP PHOTO

Hey, USA, your mind is about to be red, white, and *blown*

15 Astonishing Facts About America

BY BRANDON SPECKTOR

1 The current 50-star American flag was designed by a 17-year-old as a school project in 1958. He got a B-.

2 There is enough water in Lake Superior to cover the entire landmass of North and South America in one foot of liquid.

3 Meanwhile, we sell enough pizza every day to cover 100 acres.

4 The largest air force in the world is the U.S. Air Force. The world's second-largest air force is the U.S. Navy and Marine Corps combined.

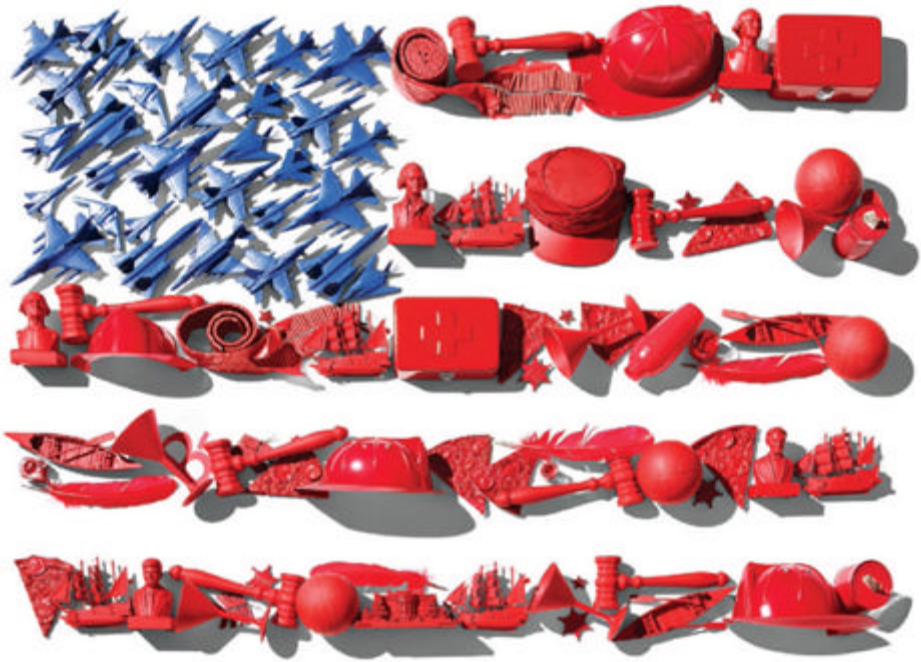
5 Three of the world's five oldest rivers flow here: The New, the Susquehanna, and the French Broad Rivers are each hundreds of millions of years old.

6 But our nation is young: The government is still paying one pension on behalf of a Civil War veteran (to his 85-year-old daughter).

7 Statistically, the deadliest job in America is ... president. Of the 44 men who've held the post, four have been assassinated in office—a rate of roughly 9 percent (or about one in ten) killed on the job.

8 The only U.S. president to own a patent and a saloon: Abraham Lincoln. His patent was for a device to lift boats over sandbars. His saloon was a miserable failure.

9 The only president who was an executioner: Grover Cleveland (as sheriff of Erie County, New York, he hanged a murderer).



10 An estimated one in ten of us could be a blood relative to one of the original 102 pilgrims who arrived aboard the *Mayflower* in 1620.

11 And roughly one in three of us has his or her fingerprints on file with the FBI.

12 According to the World Giving Index, Americans are the most likely people in the world to help a stranger.

13 Case in point: Slightly more than 69 percent of firefighters in the United States are volunteers.

14 Our *real* Independence Day—the day Congress voted us free from British rule—is July 2, 1776. July 4 is just when John Hancock put the first signature on the Declaration of Independence to spread the word.

15 Finally, the *real* acme of the American justice system? That would be the basketball court on the fifth floor of the Supreme Court building. It's known as the Highest Court in the Land.

Sources: todayifoundout.com, seagrant.umn.edu, fbi.gov, wsj.com, thewire.com, cafonline.org, nfpa.org, usnews.com, reddit.com, nationalinterest.org, navy.mil, smithsonian.com, knowledgenuts.com, washingtonpost.com, the Mayflower Society, and atlasobscura.com

PROP STYLIST: ROBIN FINLAY

PHOTOGRAPH BY ADAM VOORHES

How Far Can We Push Our Bodies?

BY JUDY DUTTON

FROM *POPULAR SCIENCE*

WE HUMANS are programmed to grow stronger, faster, and smarter; to climb higher, live longer, and populate every last inch of real estate. We've toppled scores of world records over the past few decades, but when will our progress peak? No matter how we enhance our natural capabilities, our potential is bound by certain scientific principles—laws of physics, biomechanics, and thermodynamics—that don't yield to human ambition. Here, scientists define for us where, exactly, those boundaries lie.

Most Weight We Can Lift: 1,000 Pounds

The world's strongest weight lifters can hoist 1,000 pounds—but Todd Schroeder, a biokinesiologist at the University of Southern California, thinks they're wimping out. Our brains limit the number of muscle fibers activated at any time to keep us from getting hurt. "Turn that safety off, and you can produce a lot more force," Schroeder says. He thinks optimal training, including mental, may help athletes tap as much as 20 percent more strength.

Tallest We Can Grow: 8 Feet 11.1 Inches

In the 1930s, Robert Pershing Wadlow, aka the Giant of Illinois, reached this world record due to an overactive pituitary gland. His towering stature severely stressed his circulatory system (he couldn't feel his feet) and placed structural pressure on his bones (he wore braces when he walked). As a result of these physical limitations, engineer Thomas Samaras estimates that while the average human has grown taller due to better nutrition, we will eventually level off at about seven feet. His studies have also found that every inch above five feet shaves 1.3 years off a lifespan—though others dispute this claim.

Most We Can Remember: 1 Million Gigabytes

If your brain's one billion storage neurons held one memory apiece, "you might have only a few gigabytes of storage space, similar to a USB flash drive," says Paul Reber, a psychologist at Northwestern University. But each neuron actually forms about 1,000 connections to other neurons, exponentially expanding the brain's storage capacity to around one million gigabytes. The bottom line is that storage isn't the problem: Our ability to record and retrieve data is.

Smartest We Can Get: IQ of 198

This honor goes to Abdesselam Jelloul, who set this record on a 2012 adult IQ test. But a few prodigies aside, if your score approaches

DAN SAELINGER/TRUNK ARCHIVE

Einstein's 160, you're probably at humanity's upper reaches. "Our brain operates close to its information-processing capacity," says Simon Laughlin, a neurobiologist at the University of Cambridge. This is due to a range of electrical trade-offs: If the human brain were to get bigger, it would be less efficient.

Fastest We Can Run: 10.5 Meters per Second

After Olympic sprinter Usain Bolt broke the 100-meter world record at the 2008 Olympics, Mark Denny, a biologist at Stanford University, wondered, Had "Lightning Bolt" sprinted as fast as a human can go? After having graphed 100-meter records back to the 1920s, Denny predicts humans will plateau at about 9.48 seconds for this meter mark, or 0.10 seconds faster than Bolt's current record—a lot speedier in a sport in which differences are measured by the 100th of a second.

Most Friends We Can Have: 150 Friends

We're not talking about Facebook friends, but real ones that you can depend on. With that criteria, 150 is the max, says Robin Dunbar, a psychologist at the University of Oxford. Dunbar examined census data on tribal groups, which averaged out at 148 members. The same number regularly crops up in modern business. Most famously, the founder of GoreTex insisted on separate factory units of 150 workers so people would be more likely to be pals.

Longest We Can Go Without Sleep: 11 Days

In 1964, Randy Gardner, a 17-year-old in San Diego, woke up at 6 a.m. to start his science project: an attempt to break the world record for days without sleep. He succeeded. Gardner made it to 11 days while William Dement, a Stanford University psychiatrist, monitored his vitals. Gardner remained lucid, albeit irritable. Since then, studies have shown that rats deprived of shut-eye will die within 30 days, and a rare disease called fatal familial insomnia, which stops people from dozing off at all, causes death in a few months to a few years.

Longest We Can Go Without Solid Food: 382 Days

Of course, this feat is easier to accomplish if you're obese to start with—which was the case with "Patient A.B." The 27-year-old, under observation at the University of Dundee in Scotland, weighed 456 pounds when he started his fast in the 1973 study. With a diet of purely noncaloric food such as yeast and multivitamins, he dropped to 180 by the time the study ended, more than a year later. Needless to say: Don't try this at home. R

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IT PAYS TO INCREASE YOUR

Word Power

At long last, a quiz dedicated to plain ol' fun! Inspired by* The 100 Funniest Words in English, *by Robert Beard, these picks are all a mouthful, and some even sport serious definitions (others ... well, not so much). Enjoy weaving them into your dinner-table conversation tonight. Answers on next page.

BY EMILY COX & HENRY RATHVON

1. flummox ('fluh-muks) *v.*—A: laugh out loud. B: confuse. C: ridicule.

2. crudivore ('crew-dih-vor) *n.*—A: foulmouthed person. B: garbage can. C: eater of raw food.

3. hoosegow ('hoos-gow) *n.*—A: jail. B: scaredy-cat. C: strong liquor, usually moonshine.

4. mollycoddle ('mah-lee-kah-dl) *v.*—A: treat with an absurd degree of attention. B: mix unwisely. C: moo or imitate a cow.

5. donnybrook ('dah-nee-bruk) *n.*—A: rapid stream. B: wild brawl. C: stroke of luck.

6. cantankerous (kan-'tan-keh-res) *adj.*—A: very sore. B: hard to deal with. C: obnoxiously loud.

7. codswallop ('kahdz-wah-lep) *n.*—A: sound produced by a hiccup. B: rare rainbow fish. C: nonsense.

8. doozy ('doo-zee) *n.*—A: extraordinary one of its kind. B: incomprehensible song. C: double feature.

9. discombobulate (dis-kehm-'bah-byoo-layt) *v.*—A: take apart. B: fail. C: upset or frustrate.

10. hootenanny ('hoo-teh-na-nee) *n.*—A: group of owls. B: folksinging event. C: child's caregiver.

11. yahoo ('yah-hoo) *n.*—A: overzealous fan. B: pratfall. C: dumb person.

12. kerfuffle (ker-'fuh-fuhl) *n.*—A: failure to ignite. B: down pillow or blanket. C: disturbance.

13. absquatulate (abz-'kwah-chew-layt) *v.*—A: abscond or flee. B: stay low to the ground. C: utterly flatten.

14. skullduggery (skul-'duh-geh-ree) *n.*—A: Shakespearean prank. B: underhanded behavior. C: graveyard.

15. flibbertigibbet (flih-ber-tee-'jih-bet) *n.*—A: silly and flighty person. B: snap of the fingers. C: hex or curse.

☞ ***To play an interactive version of Word Power on your iPad, download the* Reader's Digest *app.***

Answers

1. flummox—*[B]* confuse. Sarah is easily *flummoxed* by any changes to the schedule.

2. crudivore—*[C]* eater of raw food. To help boost my health, I'm declaring myself a *crudivore*.

3. hoosegow—*[A]* jail. After protesting a touch too loudly in court, Tara found herself in the *hoosegow*.

4. mollycoddle—*[A]* treat with an absurd degree of attention. "Lillie's my only grandchild—I'll *mollycoddle* her all I want!"

5. donnybrook—*[B]* wild brawl. It took four umps to quell the *donnybrook* at home plate.

6. cantankerous—*[B]* hard to deal with. The comic was greeted by a *cantankerous* crowd at his debut.

7. codswallop—*[C]* nonsense. "Oh, *codswallop*! I never went near that bowl of candy," Dad barked.

8. doozy—*[A]* extraordinary one of its kind. That was a *doozy* of a storm—luckily, we dodged the two downed trees.

9. discombobulate—*[C]* upset or frustrate. The goal of the simulator: *discombobulate* even the sharpest of pilots.

10. hootenanny—*[B]* folksinging event. After the concert, let's head up the hill for the informal *hootenanny*.

11. yahoo—*[C]* dumb person. Please try not to embarrass me at Sally's party, you big *yahoo*.

12. kerfuffle—*[C]* disturbance. I was referring to that minor *kerfuffle* called World War II.

13. absquatulate—*[A]* abscond or flee. Upon opening the door, Clare watched the new puppy *absquatulate* with her sneaker.

14. skullduggery—*[B]* underhanded behavior. The chairman was infamous for resorting to *skullduggery* during contract negotiations.

15. flibbertigibbet—*[A]* silly and flighty person. Do I have to spend the entire ride with that *flibbertigibbet* next to me?!

PIRATES IN THE HOUSE

Robert Beard's list of funny words also includes *filibuster,* which you probably know as a long political speech. But did you know it's also related to pirates? The Spanish *filibustero* means "freebooter," a pirate or plunderer. So you might say a *filibuster* in Congress is a way of stealing time—legislative piracy!

VOCABULARY RATINGS
9 & below: Amusing
10–12: Hysterical
13–15: Gut-busting

Humor in Uniform

"Serves you right—I told you not to wear those to the beach."

MY GUNNERY SERGEANT and I were inspecting a Marine training exercise when we spotted a second lieutenant ambling about. "Where is your foxhole, Lieutenant?" I asked.

He snapped off a salute and responded, "I don't know, sir!" Turning to the sergeant, he asked, "Gunnery, where is my foxhole?"

"You're standing in it, sir," said the sergeant. "All you have to do is remove the dirt."

RET. LT. COL. JOSEPH COMO, *Greenwood, South Carolina*

I WAS A MEDIC in the Army. One day, I woke up with terrible back pain. I went to the sick hall, where I was told I'd be taken to the hospital. After an hour, the captain came over. "Sorry for the delay," he said. "But we can't find the ambulance driver."

"Captain," I said, "*I'm* the ambulance driver."

JOSEPH DUNN, *Harveys Lake, Pennsylvania*

Send us your funniest military anecdote or news story—it might be worth $100! Go to page 7 or rd.com/submit for details.

ILLUSTRATION BY SUSAN KONAR

If You Worked Around Gaskets or Packing Containing Asbestos

The Garlock Bankruptcy May Affect Your Rights.

Certain Personal Injury Claims Must be Filed by October 6, 2015

There is a bankruptcy involving claims about exposure to asbestos-containing gasket and packing products. Garlock Sealing Technologies LLC, The Anchor Packing Company, and Garrison Litigation Management Group, Ltd. ("Debtors") have filed a plan of reorganization to restructure their business and pay claims.

The products (with names like Garlock, Blue-Gard, Gylon, and Flexseal) were used in places where steam, hot liquid or acids moved through pipes, including industrial and maritime settings.

Who is Affected by the Garlock Bankruptcy?

Your rights may be affected if you:

- Worked with or around Garlock asbestos-containing gaskets or packing, or any other asbestos-containing product for which Debtors are responsible, or
- Have a claim now or in the future against the Debtors for asbestos-related disease caused by any person's exposure to asbestos-containing products.

Even if you have not yet been diagnosed with any disease or experienced any symptoms, your rights may be affected. The Court has appointed a Future Claimants' Representative ("FCR") to represent the rights of these future claimants. Future claimants do not need to file a claim at this time.

What Does the Plan Provide?

The Plan is the result of a settlement agreement between the FCR, the Debtors, and the Debtors' parent company. The Plan proposes to use $357.5 million

to pay, in full, all pending and future asbestos claims against Garlock and Garrison. If necessary, up to $132 million in additional funding will be provided. If the Plan is approved, you will no longer be able to file claims directly against the Debtors or affiliated companies. If you have claims only against Anchor, you are not expected to recover anything, as that company has no assets and will be dissolved.

Who Must File a Personal Injury Claim?

You must file a claim by **October 6, 2015**, if you:

- Have a claim against Garlock or Garrison based on an asbestos-related injury diagnosed on or before August 1, 2014,
- Have not settled with the Debtors, and
- Filed a lawsuit against any other defendant or a claim against any asbestos trust as of August 1, 2014.

If you do not file a claim, you may lose your right to bring your claim in the future. Individuals diagnosed with disease after August 1, 2014 do not have to file a claim at this time, but may be able to vote or object to the Plan.

Who Can Vote on or Object to the Plan?

All identifiable asbestos claimants or their attorneys will receive the "Solicitation Package". This includes the Plan, Voting Ballot, and other information. If you have not filed a claim yet, you can vote on the Plan by providing certified information about your claim, or making a motion to vote as described in the Solicitation Package available online or by calling the toll-free number.

You will need to vote on the Plan by **October 6, 2015**. The FCR will support and vote to accept the Plan on behalf of the future claimants. **You may also object to the Plan and the adequacy of the FCR's representation of future claimants by October 6, 2015**.

When will the Court Decide on the Plan?

A hearing to consider confirmation of the Plan will begin at 10:00 a.m. ET on June 20, 2016, at the US Bankruptcy Court, Western District of North Carolina, 401 West Trade Street, Charlotte, NC 28202.

Quotable Quotes

Social change is better achieved by being for something than against something.

HELENE GAYLE, *CEO*

THE SMILE IS THE SHORTEST DISTANCE BETWEEN TWO PEOPLE.

VICTOR BORGE, *pianist*

If you don't stick to your values when they're being tested, they're not values: They're hobbies.

JON STEWART

For small creatures such as we, the vastness is bearable only through love. CARL SAGAN

WORK LIKE THERE IS SOMEONE WORKING 24 HOURS A DAY TO TAKE IT AWAY FROM YOU.

MARK CUBAN, *entrepreneur*

IN THREE WORDS I CAN SUM UP EVERYTHING I'VE LEARNED ABOUT LIFE: IT GOES ON.

ROBERT FROST

A bird doesn't sing because it has an answer, it sings because it has a song.

JOAN WALSH ANGLUND, *children's author*

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